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The format of the entries should be something like

- Title (or some combination of who-what-where, if a straightforward title is not available)
- Points of interest
- Quotations?
- Primary source and its availability; this would usually mean the original Japanese text
- Secondary sources and their availability; these would be usually translations
- Reliability level of the sources and related disclaimers (staff statements would usually be Tier 2 canon)

Gwern's source anthology includes most of these and numerous others sources collected mostly, but not exclusively from EvaGeeks over the years. Please refer to Theory and Analysis:What Is Canon? for the peculiarities in analyzing Evangelion extra-textual material.

This list mostly covers material regarding the original series and EoE. For sources concerning Rebuild of Evangelion, particularly the last film, see:

Evangelion 1.0 Complete Records Collection

Evangelion 2.0 Complete Records Collection

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Reliable and well-known sources

Hideaki Anno: What were we trying to make here?

- **Points of interest:** An insightful view of what Anno had in mind before the start of the TV series. (Please expand)
- **Quotations?**
- **Primary source:** Neon Genesis Evangelion Vol. 1 (Needs better release info!)
- **Translation:** Mari Morimoto and Fred Burke
- **Reliability level:** Solid Tier 2 canon.

The year: 2015. A world where, fifteen years before, over half the human population perished. A world that has been miraculously revived: its economy, the production, circulation, consumption of material goods, so that even the shelves of convenience stores are filled. A world where the people have gotten used to the ressurrection-yet still feel the end of the world is destined to come. A world where the number of children, the future leaders of the world, is few. A world where Japan saw the original Tokyo destroyed, discarded and forgotten, and built a new capital in Nagano Prefecture. They constructed a new capital, Tokyo-2, then left it to be a decoy-then constructed another new capital, Tokyo-3, and tried to make it safe from attack. A world where some completely unknown enemy called the "Angels" comes to ravage the cities.

This is roughly the world-view for Neon Genesis Evangelion. This is a world-view drenched in a vision of pessimism. A world-view where the story starts only after any traces of optimism have been removed.

And in that world, a 14-year-old boy shrinks from human contact. And he tries to live in a closed world where his behavior dooms him, and he has abandoned the attempt to understand himself. A cowardly young man who feels that his father has abandoned him, and so he has convinced himself that he is a completely unnecessary person, so much so that he cannot even commit suicide.

And there is a 29-year-old woman who lives life so lightly as to barely allow the possibility of a human touch. She protects herself by having surface level relationships, and running away.

Both are extremely afraid of being hurt. Both are unsuitable-lacking the positive attitude-for what people call heroes of an adventure. But in any case, they are the heroes of this story.

They say, "To live is to change." I started this production with the wish that once the production complete, the world, and the heroes would change. That was my "true" desire. I tried to include everything of myself in Neon Genesis Evangelion-myself, a broken man who could do nothing for four years. A man who ran away for four years, one who was simply not dead. Then one thought. "You can't run away," came to me, and I restarted this production. It is a production where my only thought was to burn my feelings into film. I know my behavior was thoughtless, troublesome, and arrogant. But I tried. I don't know what the result will be. That is because within me, the story is not yet finished. I don't know what will happen to Shinji, Misato or Rei. I don't know where life will take them. Because I don't know where life is taking the staff of the production. I feel that I am being irresponsible. But... But it's only natural that we should synchronize ourselves with the world within the production. I've taken on a risk: "It's just an imitation." And for now I can only write this explanation. But perhaps our "original" lies somewhere within there.

July 17, 1995,
In the studio, a cloudy, rainy day.

PS.

By the way, Shinji's name came from a friend of mine. Misato's name came from the hero of a manga. The name Ritsuko came from a friend of mine in middle school. I borrowed from everywhere. Even names that have no bearing on anything actually came from the countless rules that govern these things. It might be fun if someone with free time could research them.

Hideaki Anno: Ghibli ga Ippai Liner Notes

- *Ghibli ga Ippai* ("Full of Ghibli") is a boxset of all Studio Ghibli movies (TKLO-50180 Tokuma Japan Communications), that was released on August 1996) and contains a section about Hideaki Anno in the liner notes.
- translated by Mark Neidengard
- Source http://keyframe.cjas.org/~mneideng/trans/misc/annoghib.txt

Anno Hideaki. Director, producer. Born 1960, Yamaguchi Prefecture, Uto City. As an animator, participated in works including "Superdimensional Fortress Macross", "Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind". Afterwards, established the shared stock company Gainax for the production of "Royal Space Force - the Wings of Honneamise". Also acted as Animation Director for that work. Later, as director he worked on "Aim for the Top!", "Nadia of the Mysterious Seas", "Neon Genesis Evangelion", and others.

There are too many painful things for people to go on living in reality. Thus, *humans run and hide in dreams. They watch films as entertainment.* Animation, as a means to enjoy everything in a pure, fake world, is a realization of dreams and has become entrenched in film. In short, it is a thing where *even coincidences are arranged* and *everything* judged cinematically unnecessary *can be excized.* The negative feelings of the real world are no exception. If the director so desires, even malice toward others could be introduced straight into film. I guess that's one of the attractive things about anime. *Changing the tribulation of reality into dreams* and conveying that to the people... is that what our work is? For the sake of people who forget reality until the bill comes due, who *want to devote themselves to happy fallacies.* I guess that's our job in the entertainment and service sector.

One of the distinctive features of Studio Ghibli's works is that, *even if there are obsessive actions, there are things which appear to have not forfeited their goal.* Forfeiting one's goal leads to despair, and is a sickness that can prove fatal. I wonder if Miya-san and his people are familiar with that feeling of despair. Perhaps they don't want to show that anguish to other people. I think they specifically don't want to display the negative things called self-loathing and complexes to others. That's why Studio Ghibli's works can't show anything but superficial happiness and a reproduction of reality with all the dirty things omitted. A fiction that imitates reality, and nothing more than a single dream. I suppose that is the governance of entertainment. And I think that that is one of the reasons that Studio Ghibli's works are *safely watchable, brand name creations.*

I have no intention of denying that. All of Studio Ghibli's works are top level creations. But, *I can't help but feel that something is missing.* This is because, although the technique is there, *I can no longer feel* "blood", *the "blood"* that is surely flowing within everyone. I wonder when that happened? Studio Ghibli's works have, for me, become things that doesn't possess the image of "Anime", but rather of the so-called Japanese cinema, in other words, the Japanese movies that have now lost all their energy. That may be the reason that I *feel that something is missing.*

By the way, Mr. Miyazaki Hayao and Mr. Itano Ichirou are those I consider my teachers. I brag and say that *I'm probably the only one in the world* with that combination. *I was greatly influenced*, not just in the technical points of the animation craft, but *in the mental portion of filmmaking.* My posture on filmmaking is nothing more than an attempt to hang on to the things I learned from the two of them. *I have nothing but words of gratitude for both of them.*

When I helped out as an animator for "Nausicaa", there's something that Miya-san often told me. It seems to have come from a Chinese sage, but "There are three conditions for *accomplishing something.* Those are: *Being young*, *Being poor*, and *Being unknown.*" And, "*No matter what, make friends.*" So I was taught. This was more than 12 years ago. Yes, I've known Miya-san approximately 12 years. In that time, I think Miya-san has achieved various things. However, *he also lost many things.*

I think supporting a studio, that is, *fighting to protect the organization against ruin, is painful as it piles up.* A staff that strongly depends on you is also a double-edged sword. The height of the brand-name image and weight of the pressure from the world which prevents you from announcing even a short film without hiding your head under the excuse of it being an "experiment".

However, I feel that he is still trying to obtain something new. Is that trying to throw away the past? But could that be the *fate of those who go on making films*? In any case, *he is a person of deep craft regarding his desires.*

Finally, *I'm looking forward to "Mononoke Hime", the latest in the series of seven works stretching from his masterpiece "Nausicaa" (the movie).* No, I'm serious.

Postscript. Yesterday, when I was in a state of mental collapse after my latest work had ended, I was moved deep within my heart by an encouraging phone call I received. The words of concern proceeding from the receiver became joy on my end as, with a exaltant face, my whole body was buoyed. In secret, I rejoiced in receiving some recognition for myself. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

My master, the Lord Miyazaki Hayao-sama. From a (self-proclaimed) prodigal son, Anno Hideaki.

Hideaki Anno: Q&A on Evangelion (G.Press 06/1994)

- Translation: Riki
- Source: https://web.archive.org/web/20121231204309/http://johakyu.net/lib/2007/10/2007-10-12-000603.php

This is probably the first ever "Eva" interview, which was published in the issue of "G. Press", an information magazine published by Gainax, right after the announcement of the production of Eva.

What kind of anime is Evangelion?

Anno: It's a giant robot story set in the near future. I think that's the closest description. However, this time there are no parody elements like in "Gun Buster". There is some comedy, but it's more serious. I'm hoping it will be an anime with an unusual mood.

What kind of person is the main character?

Anno: This is my first attempt at directing an anime. The main character is a boy. He is 14 years old and in the second year of junior high school.

Are there any girls in the story?

Anno: There will be many. There are a lot of girls. But I try to avoid stereotypical characters.

Do you have a so-called theme?

Anno: I guess a theme would be what I'm thinking about at the moment. Thinking about the complexes that anime fans (including myself) have, what makes us "happy"? How can I be "happy"? I guess that's about it. Well, there are many other things. The curse of the system, parents and children, and so on.

What is your current situation?

Anno: I'm busy with the original story, plot, setting design, script, and negotiations with outside parties. And then there's the storyboarding. I wonder when I'll be able to go home.

Finally, please give some words to our readers.

Anno: It's a pity that "Uru" is frozen for now, but "Eva" will be my first authentic animation in four years, since "Nadia". I want this anime to make people feel that they want to make animation. Please look forward to it.

Interviewer: Thank you very much for your time.

Anno: You're welcome. Please come again.

・・・

The production company is a famous production company, and they are also planning to collaborate with a publishing company. There's still a lot to look forward to from Eva, and G-Press will be following it closely. Thank you.

(Written by Kamimura)

Hideaki Anno and Yoshiyuki Sadamoto: Jan '95 Creators' Conversation (NewType 01/1995)

- Quotes from Jan 1995 publication
- Translated by riki at https://www.buymeacoffee.com/rikki/hideaki-anno-yoshiyuki-sadamoto-interview-january-95
- Source:
- Source: http://anime-room.jp/modules/evangelion/eva-doc/siryou1.htm

We've been in the mid-90s before we know it, and the 21st century is around the corner.

These two men worked on such films as "Wings of Honneamise", "Aim for the Top GunBuster", "Nadia: The Secret of Blue Water " and so on as a core member of Gainax.

I would like to ask you to talk about the state of animation in the coming 21st century, as well as your hopes and predictions.

Anno: If I talk about limited to original works, I'd say that I have my doubts about the future of animation. Hope is essentially just a product of despair, so to talk about hope is to be desperate. And despair has another name, "a deadly disease". Japanese Animation today is in just such a circumstance. People are trying to cover it up by talking about hope as a self-defense. And the same goes for anime magazines. They're almost the same as information magazines.

You mean things have already come to that point?

Anno: Yes. Nowadays, most anime is originally from manga or video games. That's because sponsors, creators and audiences don't really feel the need of anime. I think that as long as the manga they like are in the cell and they can hear the voices of their favorite voice actors, that's all that matters. Anime itself is already just a secondary thing. I feel that it has already lost its power as a core piece of media. I'm disappointed in this situation.

Sadamoto: But you're still trying to make a new work called "Evangelion", aren't you?

Anno: It's a product of despair, though.

Sadamoto: In my case, I'll draw the manga version of "Evangelion" for Monthly Shōnen Ace, which will be released soon. The reason I chose the manga instead of the animation is because I was so desperate that I abandoned animation. Of course, I didn't come into the animation industry because I wanted to and people wanted me to as well like Anno, but because I wanted to satisfy my material desires. It is a rather ephemeral reason. So if you measure that "despair" in the same way as Anno, I think it's a bit of a problem.

You mean the difference in a personal attachment to animation?

Sadamoto: Of course, I have my own feelings about the films I've worked on. So it's like a difference in my approach to animation in general. To tell you the truth, I've been thinking about abandoning animation for a long time, but the people around me needed me, so I figured I'd stick around a bit longer. Metaphorically speaking, I was feeling like I'm Tsuge from "Patlabor 2" (laughs).

Anno: I guess you'd like to see where it goes.

Sadamoto: However, I did have some hope for the future. After graduating from university, I worked for Telecom for a while, and then joined GAINAX on "Royal Space Force: The Wings of Honnêamise". I was also given my first opportunity to work on character design and art direction. For me, at least, all the work I did after that was based on some of the know-how I acquired during the "Royal Space Force" period. Then I decided to put an end to that, and there was a project in progress, but unfortunately I couldn't make it. That was a big factor in my decision to move into manga, but I don't think I've given up. Some people may think that I escaped, but for me I see it as a step in the right direction before my counterattack to animation.

Anno: It's more of a disappointment than a despair. It's abandonment.

Sadamoto: Yes, abandoning the current animation, which is weirdly focused on commercialism. But there are a lot of people in GAINAX, including Anno, who haven't abandoned that animation yet. So if there's anything I can do to help them, I'm willing to help them.

What made you decide to work on a new film despite these circumstances?

Anno: Of course, it's for myself (laughs). The reason for creating things are always very personal. I don't think there's any need to talk more than that now. However, as long as it's a TV anime, it's a product, so I need to be careful not to turn it into a thing like masturbation. I've got to make this business work well including our own name value. I think it's hard to survive just by "simply making anime" nowadays.

You mean a media mix, which was popular at one point in time?

Anno: Even though it's called a media mix, if it doesn't have a "core", it's just a bunch of weak things coming together. It would be nice if we could create a strong anime at the core of it, but in reality it's hard to create a powerful energy original anime. I want to do my best so that people don't call it the sadness of the TV generation, which is lack of originality. In order to do it, we have to start by improving the environment, and that's the hardest part. People are cold toward the anime industry (laughs).

What exactly is wrong with the animation?

Anno: There are a lot of things that can be said "no". But it's very difficult to talk about them in such a short time without misunderstanding. However, I've heard that the current state of anime is very similar to the end of the Japanese film industry, which is said to be at the end of its life. It may be that anime has reached the end of its life as a media content and is coming to an end. However, even if it's just a matter of age, I can't deny that we are lacking in power and energy today. Compared to 10 years ago, it's obvious that it's not as good as it was, including what our fans have. I think this is partly because of the dispersal of energy into manga and games. Damn. It's dangerous to glorify the past too much, take a bad view of reality, and long for the future.

Sadamoto: I have a small kid, he's most fascinated by the very first "Ultraman" after all. I'm sure that this is because of the power that only epochal works have, but recent anime, especially the original ones, have very little of this power. Of course, part of the reason for this is on us. Come to think of it, why did you decide to make your upcoming new work a robot thing? I only remember asking why, and I don't think I was convinced at the time.

Anno: As a commercial product (laughs). No, seriously. I thought the best way for me to get my original project through would be to make a robot, space, or beautiful young girl one. Because I thought these categories would have the best product value. It's easy for sponsors to pay for it.

I think anime keeps hanging in there despite of the circumstance.

How do you feel about it?

Anno: I think that's a situation of just "making" things. I think we should be grateful for this situation. It's important that there's anime job. Anime is still a viable business. However, I also feel that anime is moving into a closed world. I don't want to be be satisfied with where I am and want to make our anime something we can be proud of to the world. People say that TV anime is cheap, but compared to other TV shows, it's made on a budget that's about as high as a samurai drama. It means anime is a valuable product. I would like anime to get positioned closer to the center of the economy. It's hard to be the king of entertainment , though (laughs).

What do you think why you still stick with the original?'

Anno: I think that's because my presence remains in the film. It's rather straightforward. It's a pleasant sensation. Filmmaking itself is quite a pleasant sensation. In any case, animation is supposed to be interesting.

Hideaki Anno: Anno Started Production on Eva (Newtype 04/1995)

Translation: Riki

Source: http://anime-room.jp/modules/evangelion/eva-doc/siryou2.htm#top

Anno started production on Eva

When we visited GAINAX in late January.

The new TV anime "Neon Genesis Evangelion" had already reached the final phase for the first and second episodes.

At the beginning of this interview,

Anno Hideaki said, *Don't you think robot animation is outdated?*

This is a stimulating statement.

Robot anime is certainly not a fresh genre with more than 20 years of history.

But if he thinks so, why does he participate in the planning and directing of a robot anime?

Anno: One of the reasons I thought it would be nice to do a robot anime on TV that a toy company wouldn't sponsor.

He said he wouldn't have done this anime if he had a sponsor who had interfered in the mechanic design, etc.

He also says, **Robot anime is stuck in a pattern, so I wanted to break that pattern.**

This is a completely different stance from the usual robot animation made through tie-ups with toy companies, which is the norm.

It wasn't an ambitious project that he started out with, but once he started working on it, it turned out to be a very "hard and heavy" robot animation.

By the way, he had the following in mind while working on this film.

Anno: For example, I wonder if people who are over 20 years old and like robot and bishojo(*1) anime are really happy. If they never knew that there is a greater happiness, they might be happy for the rest of their lives. But I've begun to question that kind of happiness.

- 1) Bishōjo is a Japanese term for a beautiful young girl, usually below young adult age.

For anime fans who like robots and bishojo, this story may be startled.

The main character Shinji Ikari is never portrayed as an otaku, but he is considered to be passive and not socialised.

Anno: While making this anime, I want to think about what happiness means to such a person.

Of course, that should be told as a drama in the anime. Well, It's exciting, isn't it? He also told me this story:

Anno: I haven't finished it yet, but I think the first two episodes are going to be a true reflection of my recent 'mood'. When I realized that, I thought, 'Oh, that's good.

That must mean that his inner self and the anime he is making is very close to each other. It's also interesting.

Anno: I think it's going to be a more cult anime than Nadia, because I don't think there's ever going to be an anime that has that kind of 'feel' to it.

I wonder what that "mood" is. I'm sure that anime fans will be able to experience something they've never seen before with "Evangelion". I have a feeling that they will.

Hideaki Anno: Our Happiness: The Happiness Depicted by "Evangelion" (Newtype 11/95)

- Translation: Riki
- Source: https://home.gamer.com.tw/creationDetail.php?sn=863308

Speaker

Hideaki Anno

Kotono Mitsuishi, a Japanese voice actress, singer, and narrator

Kunihiko Ikuhara, a Japanese director, writer, artist, and music producer

Newtype

We, the editors, have planned a special roundtable discussion to get to the essence of "Evangelion". In attendance, of course, was director Hideaki Anno. Also in attendance was Kotono Mitsuishi, who plays the important heroine Misato Katsuragi. The special guest was director Kunihiko Ikuhara, who is also a close friend of Anno. The theme of the film is "about happiness".

· · ·

Newtype: Now that you've seen the recording of Evangelion, how did you like it?

Kunihiko Ikuhara: It was great. I could feel the high tension of the staff. The actors are very eccentric and have a lot of charm. Ogata-san, who plays Shinji, has a nice neutral vibe. She has a sense of cleanliness that you don't find in male voice actors.

Kotono Mitsuishi: Is this the first time you've seen an Evangelion recording?

Kunihiko Ikuhara: Yes, it was my first time. I've seen the dubbing before, though.

Newtype: What was your impression when you first saw Evangelion?

Kotono Mitsuishi: When I saw the video of the first episode, I couldn't help but shout 'ooh'. After that, I just kept admiring it, going "Ooh, ooh!"

Kunihiko Ikuhara: I thought it was nostalgic when I first saw it.

Newtype: Nostalgic?

Hideaki Anno: Oh man, but I'm trying to make a '90s anime.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: No, I don't mean old. When I was watching animation in the past, I thought that the younger generation would come out and change animation in the future. But that didn't happen. So when I saw "Evangelion" for the first time, I felt nostalgic because I felt like I had encountered the kind of animation that I thought would change in the future. Well, that's just my impression of "Evangelion" from 10 years ago, and I have a different impression of it now. But I'm sure it brought me back to the feeling I had when I was a fan.

Newtype: What kind of work is "Evangelion" for you, Mitsuishi-san?

Kotono Mitsuishi: I haven't finished it yet, so it's hard to say. It's a work with a unique "smell". Director Anno also said that the characters in this animation don't speak honestly. The only ones who are honest are the boys at school.

Hideaki Anno: It's true, it's only those two (Toji Suzuhara and Kensuke Aida).

Kotono Mitsuishi: Pen-Pen is also a character that brings me comfort.

Hideaki Anno: I'm sorry, they're all twisted.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: Can I ask you something strange?

Hideaki Anno: Sure.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: The other day, in an interview with Newtype, you talked about 'seeking happiness...'. What was that?

Hideaki Anno: No, I didn't really talk about happiness all that much, it's just that the part that was covered in the article was the part where I talked about happiness.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: I see. The reason why I asked you that is because I saw "Die Hard 3" the other day. But it was a crappy movie. Before that, I saw "Forrest Gump" because it had a good reputation, but it was also a crappy movie. What's stupid is that they're both about finding happiness.

Absolute evaluation standards and absolute happiness

Hideaki Anno: Isn't that what all American movies are like these days?

Kunihiko Ikuhara: That's true. "Die Hard 3" is also a movie about the search for happiness. It starts with a story about discrimination against black people, and at the end, there's a guy who's like a communist. In other words, it's a story about happiness as a comparative theory.

Newtype: Comparative Theory?

Kunihiko Ikuhara: Yes. Sounds like America is poor and there is a lot of discrimination, but we are still happy, and we are lucky to be Americans. When I saw that, I felt dizzy and wondered if America was really that hard.Just then, I read Newtype, and there was an article titled "In Search of Happiness".

Hideaki Anno: No, I'm not talking about happiness as a comparative theory. What I've always thought about is not that it's okay to compare it to something else, but that it's absolute. What I want is an absolute evaluation.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: Are you saying you want absolute happiness?

Hideaki Anno: No, I mean, don't you want absolute evaluation in many ways, not just happiness?

Newtype: Are you saying you want absolute evaluation for "Evangelion" as well?

Hideaki Anno: I crave for it. It doesn't mean much to me if people say that my work is better than other anime. I want to make a work that I can say is good when I look at it, not when I compare it to other works. "Absolutes" exist only in the context of ideas. I want to make a work that makes something that is impossible exist only in the mind and imagination of the person. As for me, I have my own absolute evaluation standards.

Newtype: The criteria for evaluating "Evangelion"?

Hideaki Anno: Yes, I do. When I made "Evangelion", I had an ideal image in mind. I thought it should be at least this interesting. So if it doesn't reach that level, no matter how many people around me say it's interesting, I can't evaluate it in my own mind.

Newtype: The only place to measure whether "Evangelion" is interesting or not is in "Evangelion"?

Hideaki Anno: I guess that's what I'm saying. Even if people around me say it's interesting, I still feel that it should be more interesting than it is. The reason why it doesn't become interesting is because I'm not good enough. Returning to the topic of happiness, I think I feel unhappy when I feel that way.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: Hmm, what I'm hoping for from Evangelion is that it will be a drama that shows us an embodiment, a concrete way to be happy.

Hideaki Anno: You mean the way to embody happiness?

Kunihiko Ikuhara: "Yes, yes. There are many young people who think that they will be happy if their current situation changes. They think that because the situation is bad, they can't be happy or do well. That's not true. What makes us happy is our ability to materialize - to give shape to our happiness.

Hideaki Anno: Is happiness tangible? Is it something that can be easily put into words?

Kunihiko Ikuhara: Happiness can be expressed in many ways. For example, I'm happy to be dating so many girls.

Kotono Mitsuishi: Oh man... (laughs)

Kunihiko Ikuhara: (In a panic) I'm just talking about an example.

Kotono Mitsuishi: But Ikuhara-san, when you think about happiness, that's the first thing that comes up. It kind of makes sense, doesn't it?

Kunihiko Ikuhara: What makes sense? That's rude (laughs).

Everyone: (laughs).

Newtype: What is your happiness, Mitsuishi?

Kotono Mitsuishi: I can't talk about it here.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: That's right. But you're happy, aren't you, Mitsuishi?

Kotono Mitsuishi: Probably. I think the fact that you don't feel unhappy is happiness itself.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: That's what's important. People who think about how they can make themselves happy are already unhappy at that point.

Kotono Mitsuishi: Just the other day, I was so happy to find out that my favorite actor's house and mine were near each other.

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Shinji's 5-step conjugation and Misato's happiness

Newtype: Ms. Mitsuishi, is there any story you've played that you'd like to tell?

Kotono Mitsuishi: For me, it was the scene where Kaji-san and Misato got together. I'm a girl, so I like romantic scenes.

Newtype: What about you, Ikuhara?

Kunihiko Ikuhara: I'm curious about Rei's line.

Hideaki Anno: Rei has a good reputation. Why is that?

Kunihiko Ikuhara: Because it's good description. Rei says the same line to Shinji over and over again. I thought that was interesting.

Kotono Mitsuishi: It makes you think about what the lines are going to be. It's even more interesting because there are parts of it that make sense.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: I think she doesn't know how to use words, and doesn't know how to communicate with others. Rei is unconsciously using those words, but Shinji is overthinking it.

Kotono Mitsuishi: Shinji gets nervous and wonders what she meant by that line.

Hideaki Anno: To tell you the truth, I've already given away the whole story at the end of the first volume of the comic, but the story of Evangelion is about people who are clumsy in their communication. It's about a boy who is afraid of contact with others and keeps to himself, and a 29-year-old single woman who protects herself by escaping into superficial relationships. It's a story about how these people change.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: A 29-year-old single woman is Misato, right? Will Misato be happy in the end?

Hideaki Anno: I don't know. She might not. I don't know what happiness is.

Kotono Mitsuishi: What does happiness mean to Misato?

Hideaki Anno: I don't think she'll be happy if she gets together with Kaji.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: Is it wrong to get together with Kaji?

Kotono Mitsuishi: There is a theory that it is better not to be with the person you love the most.

Newtype: Does Misato love Kaji the most?

Kotono Mitsuishi: Well. I can't say for sure because I can't find anyone else who might be a potential love interest.

Hideaki Anno: "No, I don't know. Misato might fall in love with Shinji.

Kotono Mitsuishi: Hmm, we won't know for sure until about ten years from now.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: But isn't Misato always so worried about Shinji? When the enemy attacked, and Shinji and Rei were both blown up, she said, "Shinji-kun!" even when they were both blown up. Doesn't she care about Rei who blew up with him?

Kotono Mitsuishi: It's a heroine's fate to shout out the hero's name. Besides, there are many ways to use the same "Shinji-kun", such as the five-level conjugation.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: What's the fifth conjugation?

Kotono Mitsuishi: The script says "Shinji-kun," "Shinji-kun," and "Shinji-kun," but they're all different. Some say "Shinji-kun ♡" cheerfully, some shout "Shinji-kun", and some say "Shinji-kun" with a bit of a scowl.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: I see.

Ultimate Individualism and the Happiness of Boys

Kunihiko Ikuhara: I wonder what happiness is for a boy.

Hideaki Anno: I think it's getting the girl you like.

Kotono Mitsuishi: But after you get her, you'll go back to your work, won't you?

Kunihiko Ikuhara: How can you say such a thing?

Kotono Mitsuishi: Because I haven't seen too many that aren't.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: Is that something girls don't like?

Kotono Mitsuishi: As a girl, I don't like it.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: What do you do in such a case? In general, you know.

Kotono Mitsuishi: Girls will blame boys.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: I wonder what boys would do if they were blamed.

Kotono Mitsuishi: I think it's a case by case thing. Some people will break up with her because of it, and some people will think back on what he did wrong and follow through with hiswork.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: I wonder why boys are so eager to work. I've never done that before.

Hideaki Anno: Oh, you're just trying to be a good boy.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: No, I'm not. Seriously.

Hideaki Anno: I think it's because boys are only thinking about themselves. Even when they think about girls, I think they're actually doing it for themselves.

Newtype: What do you mean?

Hideaki Anno: There was once a manga in which the main character abandoned Koshien (a high school baseball tournament) for the girl he loved. I couldn't believe that kind of thing. It seems like hypocrisy to say "for the sake of the woman you love". It's like he's saying "for the girl" as an excuse when he's really just following his own desires and pleasures. I don't think men are like that, they are more self-centered.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: A man is not supposed to think about a girl...

Hideaki Anno: That's right. In other words, I'm only doing it because it makes me feel good to be thinking about girls. The word "man" is also created by the world of ideas. If you don't think of yourself as a man, there is no such thing as a man. I think it's a very vague thing. I think that's why people have been saying "if you're a man" or "if you were a man" over and over again for a long time. If we don't constantly remind ourselves of this, "men" will disappear. To put it another way, I think that everyone is only thinking about themselves. That's why I think it's okay for people to be individualistic.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: But it's difficult to maintain individualism.

Hideaki Anno: It's difficult. Especially in Japan.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: Ultimate happiness is related to ultimate individualism, isn't it? Isn't it determined by how much individualism you can maintain?

Hideaki Anno: Hmmm. Happiness can also mean a state of being free from stress and frustration.

Newtype: It depends on the definition of the word happiness.

Hideaki Anno: One of the definitions is that it would be nice if the present moment could last forever. I wish I was taking a bath with a girl.

Kotono Mitsuishi: Is it happiness?

Kunihiko Ikuhara: Yes, it's a happy moment.

Hideaki Anno: It's pretty nice to take a bath with a girl, isn't it?

Kunihiko Ikuhara: Yeah. (To editor) Oh, please cut what I just said (laughs).

Hideaki Anno: The conversation has taken a turn for the worse, hasn't it?

Newtype: Well, I guess it's time to call it a night.

Hideaki Anno: That's right. I've had a lot to drink and I'm really tired after the post-production. Well, Iku-chan, let's go out for a drink after this.

Kunihiko Ikuhara: What? Then we can drink until the last train (laughs).

Kunihiko Ikuhara, "The Awesomeness of No Vagueness".

Kunihiko Ikuhara: After the roundtable discussion, I had a thought. In this column, I'd like to talk about it. I'd like to talk about what Anno-san said about wanting an absolute evaluation.

Not only me, but many creative people say things like, "It's a good work even though there wasn't enough time in the schedule," or "For a TV animation, you did a great job." The truth is that whether or not there was enough time is not the same as evaluating the work. We all know that, but by saying things like " in spite of ......" or "for ......", we are making things relative and making the truth vague.

But Mr. Anno doesn't tolerate such vagueness. I was surprised by this. He eliminates all such excuses and strives for perfection within his own values.

He's trying to achieve perfection in his values, in story, in expression, in theme, in everything. I think that evaluations like "the mecha action isn't good enough, it's not satisfying, but the theme is great" are meaningless to Anno.

It's easy to say in words, but it's a tremendous task to actually do it.

Anno-san and I have different ways of working and different directions. But he's a really inspiring person.

Hideaki Anno: Special Interview to celebrate being made into a movie (Newtype 06/1996)

- Translation: Riki
- Source: http://anime-room.jp/modules/evangelion/eva-doc/siryou3.htm#top

Neon Genesis Evangelion is the first major wave in the sea of the anime world in more than a decade.

It has already been 17 years since the first series of Mobile Suit Gundam was aired. This was the era when teenagers packed theaters to watch "Space Battleship Yamato" and "Galaxy Express 999". The so-called anime boom peaked in 1980 and lasted for two to three years before and after. Many of today's Newtype readers must have been unborn or, at best, babies.

At that time, every teenager accepted anime without any resistance. But later on, watching anime became a "special thing" for a teenager.

Particularly in the mid-1980s, after original video animations, anime was subdivided to meet the needs of fans, and before we knew it, it had become a genre that "ordinary people" would never watch.

Of course, "Sailor Moon" and "Dragon Ball" are popular. But they are just for children.

And Hayao Miyazaki's (or Studio Ghibli's) films bring the ordinary people to theaters during the summer vacations. But they are not for anime fans at all, as a low-risk choice when you go on a date.

The film made for anime fans, and even the ordinary people says this is awesome, we have been waiting for such a film to be born.

That is Evangelion.

Evangelion received enthusiastic support not only from anime fans, but also from ordinary children, adults sensitive to cutting-edge culture, and former fans who returned to anime after a 10-year absence, and the movement continues to grow even after the TV broadcast ended.

It's been a month since the last episode, which ended without any of the mysteries being solved and caused controversy.

We were able to talk to director Anno Hideaki, whose schedule has finally returned to normal.

Anno: How I am now? ---Tired (laughs)

Anno began to speak, choosing his words carefully.

Anno: I worked on Evangelion as a live performance. I didn't do it theoretically, whether it was the story or the placement of the characters. As I worked, I took in various opinions and analyzed my own psychology, and I thought, 'Oh, this is how it should be. I found the words afterwards.

At first I thought it was going to be a simple robot anime. But if the story goes mainly in a school, it won't be the same as other robots anime. So I decided to make a protagonist with two identities: the school and the organization. I didn't think too much about it in the beginning.

As the staff gradually joined in, and when someone's guitar began to play, the drums and bass changed in response to the ad-libbing, the sense of live performance came alive in "Eva". The end of the performance is when the broadcast is over. That's why I can't start the next script until the previous one is finished. It takes me longer than in a normal production.

After finishing the script, I go back and review it. If I found a wrong part, I fix it on the storyboard. That's why we couldn't do the final episode until the last episode was approaching.

After all, the film Evangelion has two aspects: a story and a live documentary of Anno's own emotional journey. This is a reflection of his strong will "not to lie about what I want to do.

Anno had to face his own "mental problems" by getting involved in Eva.

Anno: I made the main character 14 years old because he is "more than a child, less than an adult". You can live alone, and you can live in the company of others. If it was centuries ago, you'd be regarded as an adult. In those days, you had only 50 years to live, so you had to be independent at age 14 or so. Nowadays, people have more than 70 years to live, so if you are Japanese, there are many people who are still dependent on their parents even when they reach 20 years of age.

There is also the problem that parents may be making you dependent on them. They want children to be children forever. Including that, I think 14 years old is appropriate for the theme of the film, because it's an age when you can be mentally independent.

Speaking of improvisation, in two episodes I came up with a word that would be the vertical axis of the story, the Human Instrumentality Project, but I hadn't decided what it would mean. I just liked how that kanji looks (laughs). In the world of "Eva", the population is halved, but it's a replacement theory, and the world where the human population is actually halved is the animation world. I think the anime industry is the same as the world of the anime, where there used to be a lot of momentum, but the number of people in the industry has been decreasing and it's a closed world.

Come to think of it, a couple of years ago, Anno said, "The world of Gundam is the mind-set of a director named Yoshiyuki Tomino. The world of "Gundam" is the mind-set of a director named Yoshiyuki Tomino, and Char, who struggles like Don Quixote to free the people in the closed world of the space colony (an anime company), is Tomino's own replacement theory.

It would be interesting to replace "Eva" with a story about a group of amateurs, Nerf, or Gainax, dominated by director Anno, taking on the challenge of a world where professional soldiers are unable to break through the current situation.

Anno: Is that so? By all accounts, Nerv is a group of amateurs. I make it look like a military formality, but it's not an army. I didn't want it to be an army. I think it's funny because anime magazines usually says Misato as a "quality soldier". It makes me wonder what makes her look quality. If she was, I feel sorry for the soldier. She makes plans in a willy-nilly way. It was all just a dumb luck. Ritsuko is the only one who has a decent strategy plan.

As for Misato, she is both subject and object, and she is partially similar to me in the real world. Earlier in the February issue of Newtype, Yuki Masami drew a picture quoting episode 7, and even though it's not that straightforward, Nerv has a similar meaning to it.

Here, Anno's mental is synchronized with the Tokyo-03 in 2015. After all, the city where there was no one else in the city describes the anime industry got slightly crowded with the immigrants who wanted to watch "Eva". At the same time, however, Anno was having a frustration towards some anime fans.

The word "Human Instrumentality Project" sounds from science fiction indeed. That is the "completion of the missing mind" of us modern people. To be honest, this concept a bit of surprised me. It is something that was not expected at the beginning of the program, something that people are missing. I wonder what kind of conflicts the director had to go through before he settled on a form of "heart".

Anno: I wasn't aware of the mental problem, but in Japan, the U.S. and some countries, material desires are almost always satisfied. I think the mental problem arises when people are already satisfied with their lives. If you have to worry about the foods for tomorrow, you don't care how others think about you, I mean, you'd work harder to make a better life. So in this age of satiation, the issue of the mind becomes a theme. I ended up there by going through Eva.

I couldn't draw it out for various reasons, but as far as episodes 25 and 26 (the last episode) in the original storyline, I even had the plot for episode 25. Episode 26 was abandoned at the plot stage. We'll rework the original episodes 25 and 26 in the video and LD that will be released next year, but for episode 26, we're going to rework it again visually. If I can't come up with anything, I'll take that plot apart and do it again. The episodes 25 and 26 that aired on TV were a direct reflection of how I was feeling at that point in time, so I'm happy with them. I don't regret it.

March 4. After the end of the voice recording of "Evangelion" episode 25, the staff and cast members held a party near the Tabak recording studio in Tokyo.

Anno: At that time, the script for the final episode was not yet up. It was all done the following week. We only had three days of drawing work in fact. To be honest, I don't think it even needed to be drawn up as an expression. In fact, it should have been fine for me to come out and talk. I thought that'd still work, but as expected, they refused to let me.

I used the non-cellucciated parts, the storyboard drawings, on purpose. It's not that I couldn't make it in time or anything. Anyway, I wanted to free myself from cell animation. Cell is just symbolism. If you see Asuka's picture with a marker and hear Miyamura's voice, it's more than enough to make it Asuka. I didn't want to get hung up on cells anymore.

But that doesn't mean we're going to go to CGI. I just wanted to tell that animation can function on line drawings alone as a medium of expression. I wanted to say something to those idiots who complain that "it's not a finished product because it's not celluloid" or "it's not celluloid so it's corner-cutting".

It's a liberation. I just wanted them to destroy the stereotypes that they have. It has gone beyond "I can't recognize her as a human being unless it's a cell," and it's almost a fetishism.

The first time I tried was in episode 16 when I made the line speak. Animation is just symbols, so it's a lie from the first place. It's fiction. No one thinks of it as a documentary.

But my own sense of live performance is that I want to put documentary in the film. It would be a rare way to destroy symbolism in TV animation. When the line drawings came out, some people in the anime industry called it lazy, but it's no good if they see it as lazy. They don't realize that we are aiming at it as an "expression," but the conception doesn't exist anymore in their minds.

I think there may be other ways, but in the last episode, it's still a pure word play.

Some of the core fans were in denial about the episode 26. Of course, it is true that there are fans who felt frustrated in that it did not depict the original storyline. I hear that there are many straightforward "verbal attacks" in online service(*1). On the other hand, this last episode recorded the highest viewership of "Evangelion", and the viewers who do not usually watch anime said, "Evangelion is amazing!

- 1) A method of communicating data between a personal computer and a server (or node or host) in a host station using specialized software, etc., via a communication line and services provided by it. Its heyday was in the late 1980s and 1990s, when it gradually declined as the Internet was later opened up to the general public.

Anno: A lot of people from online service are stubborn and unable to think in a flexible way. Even though they're doing it in their own room, they get the impression that they're connected to the whole world. But that's just "information". There's no way to verify that information, but they feel like they have it all figured out. That comfort feeling is the pitfall. Besides, they've lost their sense of value for information.

Another thing is they can do it anonymously. For example, they would call me names and say, "Anno, kiss my ass." If I was next to him, I might hit him. If I said this, I'd probably get objections from online service, but that would be the graffiti-covered toilet. You don't have to write your name on it. It goes on and on in his room.

The system is great, but the people using can't master it well. Of course, it's not for everyone. But it's very hard to find normal people there. Anyway, I don't have time to be bothered by them now. I just want to tell them to get to know the world a little better and get back to reality.

For example, the story that episodes 25 and 26 will be retaken has already been sent to online service by Gainax. This is because if we don't give out accurate information, people will get a lot of fake information, but as soon as we give it out, we got some ridiculous statement that it's a money-making scheme. It shows they don't understand economic logic, and they don't realize the hypocrisy of their own hypocrisy in believing that they are justified in saying such things.

It seems to me that "Evangelion" has only its negative elements (laughs). Anime fans are made fun of because they don't realize how childish their ideas are. It's because they don't leave their room. They only stay in the safety of their own room.

Anime fans have nothing to be certain about in their minds. That's why they look to anime for help. It's not like Terayama Shuji's "Throw away the book, go to the city", but they have to go to the city and socialize with various people.

The reason why I can say that is because I am aware that I don't have anything in me... I'm so stupid that I've been an anime fan for 21 years and I've only realized that at the age of 35 (laughs).

Unfortunately, that's it all for this time. There's a lot more to hear and talk about. Newtype would like to hear from Anno several more times in the future, and we hope to introduce his comments in the next issue in the form of a separate supplement to the magazine.

If you'd like to "talk" to the director, send a postcard or letter to Newtype, it's okay to ask questions, feedback or criticism.

As long as you are willing to "talk" with him in the magazine, he will surely respond to you (*2).

- 2) This project did not come to fruition.

Hideaki Anno and Yuko Miyamura: Say 'Anta Baka' To Me! (Animage 06/1996)

- Animage 1996 Anno X Miyamura discusion
- 1996/06/10
- Source: https://web.archive.org/web/20080127001226/http://jo%C2%ADhakyu.net/lib/2007/07/2007-07-27-000535.php
- Translation by: Xard

Anno: First of all, men who want to be spoiled by women like this line without a doubt. If such a man is told "anta baka" or the like in a gentle voice it is enough to make him fall madly in love. 06/1996

AM: Isn't director Anno like that himself?

Anno: I'm like that without a doubt.

AM: Miyamura, do you understand this feeling?

Miyamura: My position is that of a woman, so not really. In my case, rather than Asuka-chan something like "aaahhh I want to pin down a cold girl like Rei-chan" would be a preferred scenario.

AM: She'd be at your mercy?

Miyamura: She'd be at my mercy. She wouldn't seem to say anything after the deed either.

AM: "After the deed"? (laugh)

Miyamura: You know, Asuka seems like she'd make a lot of noise, if pinned down.

Anno: She seems like she'd make many orders.

Miyamura: Exactly. For example "stop!" or "it hurts!"

Anno: In the end you'd get told "you suck" by her (laugh)

Miyamura: (what, you mean by me?) (laugh)

AM: (in a somewhat dumbfounded state) Is Yuko Miyamura a man...

Miyamura: IF I was a man... it's that kind of talk.

Anno: Rei seems like she'd be less trouble.

AM: She is the most popular character, Rei that is.

Miyamura: I wonder if everyone has such desires.

Anno: They do, don't they. People who are S (sadistic) go for Rei for sure, with their sadistic desire. On the other hand, I think M (masochistic) types go for Asuka. As for Misato, people who are her generation agewise but psychologically childish are inclined towards her.

Miyamura: But don't humans have both (S&M) sides?

Anno: Yes, they do. Fundamentally everyone has. It's only a question of which side is more dominant.

[...]

Anno: Asuka is a good character. I had no intention to become so attached to her. (In creating a character) feedback from the performer is quite important, so it might be because of Miyamura Asuka ended up like that.

[...]

Miyamura: I'm sure he'll do something (for Asuka) with the video!

Anno: Please don't expect too much (laugh)

AM: Thank you very much

TL notes: 1. I've translated Miyamura's description of Rei as "cold girl", but the original expression 無機質な女の子 could also be rendered as "inhumane girl" or "robotic girl" or even "inorganic girl". Cold girl is the best choice in terms of nuance. 2. 押し倒す = oshitaosu means 1. to pin down; to knock down; to push (and hold) somebody down (esp. with sexual connotations) So the rapey vibe in what I have translated as "pin down" is not accidental at all. 3. Asuka's post-coital judgement on her partner as ヘタクソ or hetakuso I've translated as "you suck". I just want to remove any potential ambiguity: no, this is not a moral judgement or whatever, Asuka is dissing her hypothetical partner for being unskillful.

Alternate Translation

"I want to be told, "What are you, stupid?"

- *Translation by: Riki*

Mr. Anno has been written as if he was drunk.

However, in reality, he was not that drunk.

According to him, "I added the word 'drunk' later because it was boring if I left it as it was. I didn't drink that much."

From "Hideaki Anno: Schizo Evangelion"

Monthly Animage July 1996 issue, Hideaki Anno and Yuko Miyamura

-When we saw the last episode of Evangelion, we thought, "What? No way. Is this it?" The same feeling that we felt when we watched the final episode of Evangelion must have been felt by the voice actors who played the roles.

Yuko Miyamura, representative of your feelings, boldly approaches the core of "Evangelion" and director Anno's true feelings!

Animage(AM): What's most talked about now is the final episode of the TV series. How did you feel about it, Miyamura-san, who has been playing the role of Asuka?

Miyamura: Hmm, I felt like I was left behind. In episode 24, Asuka ends up lying on a hospital bed with her eyes open, and that's where my image of Asuka stops, so please do something about it, director!

AM: She's still lying on the bed with her cheeks looking very hollow. I wonder when Asuka will be complemented.

Anno: I wonder when she will be complemented.

Miyamura: Oi, what are you going to do if the director says so?

AM: I think it was a total of 25 episodes, 26 episodes (the final episode), and one story.

Anno: Yes, we stretched it out and changed the story a bit. That still wasn't enough, so it's not like we stretched it out. It wasn't long enough at all. After all, the scenario was 'written and sent off'.

AM: What do you mean by 'written and sent off'?

Anno: In short, if you can't do episode 1, you can't do episode 2, and if you can't do episode 2, you can't do episode 3. From episode 1 to episode 6, we messed things up. We would do episode 5 or 6, and then go back to episode 3, and so on. I wanted to create a certain scene, but then I realized that I didn't need the whole scene. The thing I wanted to do the most turned out to be something I didn't need. It's like a live performance. I make everything according to the situation at the time.

AM: I'm looking at it from here, it's extremely detailed, well I'm sure it will all add up, and the setting is very well thought out, which is amazing.

Anno: In fact, until about halfway through the Human Instrumentality Project, we hadn't really decided what we were going to instrumentalize in terms of human instrumentality.

AM: So, of course, there was no explanation to the voice actors as to what The Human Instrumentality Project is.

Miyamura: There was no explanation at all.

Anno: (Pretending to be innocent) Oh, there was no explanation? (Not eating, just drinking.)

Miyamura: So when I ask, "What is The Human Instrumentality Project?" he just says, "Well, I don't know."

Anno: It's not that I was playing around, it's just that I hadn't really decided.

AM: It's amazing that you made it to episode 24.

Anno: Well, it's like a miracle (laughs). It was all done live. While we were playing, we ran out of performance time, performers, instruments, money, and even the score.

AM: Anno-san, did you create your previous TV series with this kind of live feeling?

Anno: I also had a half-live feeling when I worked on Nadia, but this is the first time I laid out the rails from scratch. It was like 'I've come this far, so lay out the rails for the next week.' So who knows where it will go?

AM: The actors must have been working under a sense of uncertainty.

Miyamura: In the first half, we were shown the storyboards ahead of time, so we knew roughly what was going to happen next. But after one episode or so, there was a point where we had no idea what was going to happen next.

Anno: I couldn't even finish the storyboard for the last episode.

AM: Was there anything whiter on the recording screen than the storyboard?

Anno: It wasn't white, was it? The names of the actors and even their lines were written on the screen (laughs). For episode 25, we did the post recording with just the names written on the screen. But then I realized that if I wrote the dialogue along with the names, there would be no paper noise when they turned the script. I thought that was a good idea (laughs).

AM: But as an actor, how did that work out for you?

Miyamura: Well, it's episode 26, right? The only situation is that Shinji is standing on the stage like this, talking to himself, so just having the lines written like that didn't feel strange to me.

AM: I think that was directed in a very theatrical way.

Miyamura: When I was doing stage performances at university, I still do it now, but we used to incorporate that kind of feeling into certain scenes, and I also used to do it a lot in etude (practice) at university. Because it's easier to think for yourself when there's nothing around you. But the folding chair is theatrical, but I felt it was more like counseling.

Anno: Oh, really?

Miyamura: In counseling, for example, if a man goes to a counseling session because he has had a huge quarrel with his wife and is very angry with her, he is first made to sit on one of the two chairs facing each other. The first thing they do is put him in one of the two chairs facing each other, and they make him say all the things he wants to say, such as what happened, what disgusted him, and what his wife is doing. Then he is asked to sit on the other side of the chair he was sitting on, and he is asked to put himself in his wife's shoes and talk about what has happened. The way you look at yourself when you sit on this chair is different from the way you look at yourself when you sit on the other chair, so you can look at yourself calmly. I heard that there is such a therapy. I thought it was similar to that.

Anno: I didn't know that. Why didn't you tell me such an interesting story before, while we were making it?

Miyamura: After I saw the finished product, I thought that's what the director must have meant.

Anno: I really didn't know that. Maybe I'm doing it unconsciously.

AM: Does that mean it might be true, if asked?

Anno: That's right.

I guess that's how things become more and more 'konjac questions and answers(*1)'(konjac mondo' in Japanese).

- 1) Ridiculous questions and answers. Also, misguided responses.

Miyamura: What is 'konjac mode'? (Mishearing 'mondo' and 'mode')

Anno: It's not 'konjac mode,' it's 'konjac question and answer.

Miyamura: When you said 'konjac mode,' I wondered what you were switching.

Anno: No, 'question and answer'! (laughs)

AM: I've always thought you were a bit of an eccentric person. It's interesting to hear about animation with a sense of live performance. Watching the last two episodes was like a live performance for me. Most of today's videos can be bought and watched whenever you want. But watching the last two episodes of the TV series in real time and experiencing the various situations of the time was like watching a live performance.

Miyamura: I wonder what kind of ending the fans were expecting.

AM: I think you were confident that you could create the ending that everyone was expecting.

Anno: I don't know, but I was able to create an ending that people would enjoy. It was impossible, though.

AM: For example, what was the Human Instrumentality Project all about?For example, what was the Human Instrumentality Project, and what was the final goal of Gendo Ikari?At the end, you want to have a sense of satisfaction when you understand it all.

Miyamura: Is that going to be resolved in the new video version?

Anno: I don't know what's going to happen yet. I'll think about it from now on.

Miyamura: There's a graph that shows the stress levels of people all over Japan, and the stress gauge of people who watched the last episode of Evangelion went through the roof.

AM: How was your own stress gauge, Miyamura?

Miyamura: I gained five kilos because I couldn't take the stress with me...

Anno: It's called bulimia, isn't it?

Miyamura: I became bulimic.

AM: You look so skinny on screen.

Anno: I wonder if I should fatten her up for the retakes of episode 24.

Miyamura: You left me to fatten up a bit. But as an actor, I was deeply involved, so I was really shaken up by the work of 'Evangelion'. I think that's why I started to overeat after the show. My heart was shaken so badly. What are you going to do about it, director?

Anno: It's like Heart of Darkness, that's cool. (He's already looking at the alcohol.)

In the beginning, Asuka's personality was straight as a bamboo shoot, and she appeared on the scene in a cheerful manner. Then, from a certain point, she started to dig deeper and deeper into her heart.

Miyamura: Yes, she dug in. She was fragile.

Anno: She was fragile, wasn't she? I wonder why. I didn't intend to go that far in the beginning.

Miyamura: I see. I wonder why it turned out that way.

Anno: I don't know. Didn't it just happen? (laughs).

AM: I thought her exhilarating personality in the first half was a foreshadowing for her depressing moments in the second half.

Anno: No, that wasn't my intention at all. We had been doing a lot of depressing stuff up until episode 6, and the staff was getting tired, so we decided to do something cheerful. Of course, I didn't think of foreshadowing, though it would be cool to say that I did. Well, whatever. I'm getting tired of theorizing (laughs). But to be honest, I didn't completely grasp the character of Asuka at first. Then, when I came up with the line, "You idiot," the character was born. “Chance" and "You idiot" are two great lines.

Miyamura: That's a good line.

Anno: A man who wants to be spoiled by a woman will definitely like this line. I'm sure it feels good. If a woman says, "You're an idiot," in a gentle way, men will be melted just by that.

AM: Isn't that what director Anno is like?

Anno: I definitely do.

AM: "Do you understand this feeling, Miyamura?

Miyamura: I'm a woman, so I don't know. I'd rather prefer to have an inorganic girl like Rei on my bed than Asuka.

AM: At your mercy?

Miyamura: Exactly. Rei doesn't seem to say anything even after it's over, does she?

AM: What do you mean 'after it's over'? (laughs).

Miyamura: Asuka seems so annoying when you push her down on the bed.

Anno: She seems to order a lot of things...

Miyamura: That's true. She'd say things like, "Stop it!" or "It hurts!"

Anno: She's going to say, 'You're terrible at this' at the end.

Miyamura: 'Am I?' (laughs).

AM: (Somewhat stunned) I wonder if Yuko Miyamura is a man.

Miyamura: I'm talking about if I were a man.

Anno: Rei seems to be less of a problem.

AM: Rei is also the most popular, right?

Miyamura: I wonder if everyone has that desire.

Anno: I'm sure there is. People who are sadists will definitely go for Rei, because of their sadistic desires. Masochists would probably go for Asuka, though. And women of the same generation and those who are mentally children tend to go for Misato.

Miyamura: But don't people have both?

Anno: Yes, we have both. Basically, everyone has both. The only difference is which one is bigger. Even in the last episode, there are people who are happy with that, and there are people who are not happy with that. In short, humans are greedy and like both hot and cold weather. However, the reason why we think cold is better when it's hot is because our desire to be hot is satisfied, so we want to be cold at that time. And vice versa. So, no matter what kind of ending you make, people will complain. However, the last part is not what the majority of people want, but what I showed to a very small number of people, saying, "This is what we need." I presented only the bare necessities.

AM: When you say 'what we need', do you mean all the people who watch Evangelion?

Anno: Anime fans. Small children might be a little off.

AM: It's just that Evangelion seemed to involve a lot of ordinary people as it went on air. Although I had the impression that the majority of people were anime fans in the end.

Anno: I think it's just that ordinary people became anime fans again.

AM: Maybe so.

Anno: There was a guy who said he had stopped being an anime fan, but then he came back. Those people are still fine. Anyway, I started to hate anime fans in the process. I hate the people who cling to their fake happiness. Television is the easiest form of entertainment. All you have to do is turn on the TV in the comfort of your own home, in the privacy of your own room, and you have nothing to do. With movies, you still have to pay for it, and you still have to go to the theater. Television is entertainment that you can watch in the comfort of your own room without making the least effort. You have the right to refuse to watch it. And yet, people get overly excited just by sitting around watching my programs without spilling any blood. From my point of view, they are fake, but they are clinging to their fake happiness. They think that the happiness they are clinging to is good, and they seek it more and more excessively, don't they? Happiness given to them by others. And then suddenly, in the end, it's not the end you wanted, and you get angry and hate only on this point. I wonder about that kind of thing. I knew that'd happen, but I wanted to do it.

AM: But, Anno, you're an anime fan yourself, aren't you?

Anno: So I'm giving myself half a rude awakening. Some people call this "commercialism" to sell new videos, but that's just a misunderstanding. There's no doubt that I'm going to feel bad about this (choosing this last part).In fact, I'm going through a lot of unpleasant feelings right now. When I enter the classroom in the morning, there are harsh complaints about me written all over the blackboard, and in addition, there are harassments on and in my desk. Well, I was prepared for that to a certain extent, and it's like I gave rude awakening half to myself and half to the audience watching TV!

AM: I'm not sure why you feel the need to give rude awakening to anime fans.

Anno: I didn't want them to be too dependent on it.

Miyamura: I understand the director's feeling. You can say, "I gave them a rude awakening," because you're the director, but you shouldn't have done that (laughs).

Anno: Up until now, everyone (the creators) wanted to do it, but they couldn't.

Miyamura: Because, to make something and have it received by everyone is.... I think that's the act of giving happiness, even if it's a fake happiness. So, director, please get it right in the video!

Anno: Nope. (laugh)

Miyamura: Expressing yourself, creating a stage, making a movie, writing a poem, whatever it may be, you are doing it because you want to convey something. When you want to feel happiness with others, it is also a created happiness, but you are creating it because you want to. So to now think that it's not good to be manipulated by the happiness they've been given is just wrong.

Anno: I don't think so. From my point of view, I thought it would be better for them.

Miyamura: There will come a time when some people will realize that the happiness they have been given is a fake, and those who don't will never come. Isn't that enough?

Anno: For now, I've only given them one chance. It's probably the first and last time I'll be able to do something like this. "I was able to do this because it was the right time."

Return to Reality

Anno: I think the basis of "Evangelion" was to do it as if it were a live performance, without betraying my current feelings. As long as my feelings go that way, I won't betray them. At the very least, all I have to do is not betray myself. However, if I don't continue with this work, I will be betraying the staff (who have worked with me on this work). I asked the crew to make the last part of the TV show as a way of asking them to forgive me for doing another remake on video.

AM: If you had had plenty of money at this time, and could have extended the show for three weeks or so to make up for the time lost, would the ending have been different?

Anno: The methodologies are different, but what I was saying was probably the same. The theme is the same. I think it came down to "return to reality". I really didn't want animation, or at least the "Evangelion" that I've been working on, to become just a "refuge". It was just a place to escape from reality, and by being completely involved in it, they were only escaping the pain of reality, and there was nothing to return to reality from. There was nothing to return to reality from there. More and more people are escaping, and if things continue as they are, in the extreme, it will become a religion. It will be like Aum believers and Shoko Asahara. I think I had the potential to become the guru of a new religion if I did well here, but I didn't want to do that. I thought that I alone was enough to hang on to the spider's thread. (*2)".

(*2) The Spider's Thread: A short story by Ryunosuke Akutagawa (1918). The story is about a villainous hero who ascends to heaven by hanging on to a spider's thread that Shaka lowered from heaven, but falls into hell again because of his selfishness.

Miyamura: This is the kind of story that says, "Don't come here, you guys."

AM:Do you understand that feeling?

Miyamura: I do. There are people who are incredibly dependent on others, not just anime fans. It's hard to believe sometimes. For example, people who write their problems in their fan letters. Of course, if they write their problems in their fan letters and it makes them feel better, that's fine. But if the person says, "I write so many problems in my letter to you, why don't you answer me?" I think that person is looking for something a little different. They don't realize the mistake. I think that's because your vision has become narrow. You can't get rid of that unless you do it yourself. That's why I really understand what the director meant by "rude awakening". But of course there are other ways. Since I became an artist, I think that positive things (expressions and works) can definitely involve the people who receive them and make them positive. So, I believe that if you can feel it even once, you can definitely get that perspective (from the recipient).

Anno: I guess I was too straightforward. There's nothing wrong with what we did. As for the methodology, I think I could have done something different if I had had a little more time. It would have been nice to just teach the reality that there is no such thing as a kind of (manufactured) pleasure that lasts forever. The world can betray you.

AM: But Anno-san seems to be an anime fan.

Anno: Of course, that's because I don't like myself. That (disliking anime fans) is what I'm saying to myself, too. I think the pain is the same.

Miyamura: I've heard that people who hate themselves hurt others.

Anno: I think so, too. I've hurt a lot of people.

Miyamura: I think so, too. I hate myself, too, so ahahaha.

AM: "People who don't like themselves hurt other people." That's a line that's in there somewhere.

Anno: I barely know how much I can hurt (others), so I know the right distance between myself and them. That's about it. I can recognize when I'm hurting someone. I think that's much better than being unaware of it. Unawareness is the scariest thing. Like, 'Oh, I'm hurting you. But I can't do anything about it anymore.' That's why I thought episodes 25 and 26 would hurt the viewers a lot, but that's okay too. I'd rather they get hurt. If the story ends without anyone getting hurt, I think the only thing that would come would be praise, and the only response would be one-sided praise like "I was so moved." That would probably make me feel good when people said that, but I also felt really bad about the pre-established harmony of the ending.

I also thought it would be a good topic (laughs). If I wanted to make it more commercially profitable, I could have dropped episodes 25 and 26 since I didn't have the time to do so, and made up the broadcast time with a video compilation and apologized. If we had done that, the number of people who would have been upset would have been small, we would have gotten a lot of sympathy votes, and we could have said, "We're sorry we didn't have time." I'm sure I'll get letters from people saying, "I'm sorry you didn't have more time, but please show us the rest of the movie on video or whatever." It's much better from a commercial point of view, because you get the sympathy of the customers and they buy the rest of the story. However, in episodes 25 and 26, I wanted to throw away all commercial thoughts and put my honest feelings on the screen. It was a last-minute choice, though.

AM: But what about those 25 or 26 episodes that were made that way? It wasn't just about hurting people, was it?

Miyamura: I think so, because the director had a lot to say in episodes 25 and 26.

Anno: Was there anything? (laughs) (He's already drunk.)

Miyamura: I thought that way. Episode 25 is all about what the director wanted to say. I think that's how it turned out when you made an animation of what you wanted to say in that situation. Wasn't that what the director wanted to say?

Anno: I think that's what I wanted to say, but what did I say? (laughs). I've forgotten what I said. But I'm OK with it because a woman I know, who's over 30, cried when she saw episode 25. She said she remembered it from her life. I'm okay with that.

AM: That's the part about Misato, isn't it?

Anno: The part about Misato, she remembered something about it. When a certain kind of woman sees that, it must make her feel very uncomfortable. Just the fact that she felt that way was OK with me. At least, as far as I know, there are two of them. Two people is enough. I'm sure there are more, though.

AM: I wonder what it means to be able to cry. A kind of release?

Anno: No, I think she felt bad.

AM: I think so, too. That's what she meant.

Anno: The purpose of episode 25 was to make the viewer feel so bad that he or she would puke, but I wasn't able to do that. I couldn't do a good job of replacing reality instead of copying it.

It was a failure, episode 1

AM: What's the difference between fans who are OK with it and fans who are not OK with it in episode 25 and 26?

Anno: It's the way they cling to it...

AM: Is it wrong to live by clinging?

Anno: I think it's better than dying.

AM: But the fact that it's just an animation on TV is shameful, yes?

Anno: The fact that it is being used as a refuge is shameful. It's a negative thing that it's only a place to escape to. I guess I had a desire to change that into something positive. I may have used the wrong method, but I'm not lying about my feelings.

AM: That's, for example, the most memorable line in the first episode, 'Don't run away." That mood dominated the first episode, and I think it dominated the impression of "Evangelion", in my opinion.

Anno: It's an obsession itself. Even if I try not to think about it, it pops up in my head, and I made it because I was caught up in an idea that I couldn't get rid of by my own will, so impatience and things like that appear on the screen. That's especially true for the first episode. The first episode was a failure.

AM: Because the obsession came out too much?

Anno: That's part of it, but I put in so many things that I think the first episode was three minutes too long when I was cutting it. Anyway, I realized it perfectly during the post recording. Big mistake. After that, I was in a hurry. I wanted to die when I saw the rushes (preview).

AM: When I watched the first episode, there were many scenes where the way each word was chosen and the way it was chosen were so close to each other that if a redundant line came here, the world would collapse at once. For example, you never let Gendo speak any more than he has to. I'm really impressed with the choices you made.

Anno: It's no good at all. Also, overwhelmingly, it didn't beat Gundam (First) in my mind. Unfortunately, it couldn't beat the first episode of Gundam.

AM: I felt that you were trying very hard, very carefully.

Anno: To put it another way, I spent a lot of time on it, and this is what I got. Anyway, I couldn't do it well on my own part. The pictures and other things were already fine. My part, the script, the structure, and other parts were a disaster. I couldn't help but feel sorry for them. I didn't want the staff to feel this way again. That's all.

AM: From that moment on, "Eva" became a live show.

Anno: From the beginning, I wanted to do it like a live show. Until then, I thought I'd take it more easy, because it was television. Then, I couldn't take it easy anymore. I realized that I couldn't let the staff feel this way again. I completely reworked the second episode in the middle. (Turning to Miyamura) It was all a mess, wasn't it?

There were a lot of cuts, lines were replaced, and there was a lot of fuss, wasn't there? After the post recording script was finished, we changed a lot of things, including the lines. The structure was kept the same, but the details and dialogues were changed, and the cuts were increased. But it still didn't work. I thought, "This isn't going to be interesting." Until I saw the first rush (preview), I didn't know what I wanted to make. I thought the script was not good enough, but I was so naive that I thought I could make it work. I thought the script was not good enough, but I did it with a naive feeling that I could make it work. Then, I couldn't make anything of the first episode. It was a huge failure.

AM: You tried to make up for it in episode 2. At what point did it seem to get back on track?

Anno: Well, when we finished the second episode, it was already OK during the recording. The dubbing was almost perfect.

AM: There are a lot of feedback scenes in episode 2, aren't there?

Anno: Episode1 and Episode 2 are one story. It was tough. The other episodes were all tough, but episodes 1 and 2 were the toughest.

Asuka's German

AM: When you played Asuka, you had to speak German.

Miyamura: Yes, I did. When I was chosen for the role of Asuka, the director, Anno, who I didn't even know at the time, told me that there was a scene where I had to speak German, so I had to practice. So I decided to go to a language school, and I learned German. I thought I would be able to use German in my daily conversation, but the German that came up in episode 8 was a military term. When I asked my native teacher about military terms, he said he didn't understand it (laughs).

Anno: So I felt bad for Miyamura, so I added some German dialogue to the second half of the story.

Miyamura: Then he asked me to improvise.

Anno: Only the last greeting and the first line of the mother's speech were decided, and the rest was ad-libbed, so I was told to fill in the lines herself.

Miyamura: Since I was having such a hard time, the director asked me to ask someone who knew German to do it, but I said, "Since I've practiced so hard, I'm okay with it." I worked very hard on it, asked for the length of the lines, timed it myself, and thought it was OK. But I put in so many things that it didn't sound like a phone conversation, so it had to be cut a lot (laughs).

Anno: So I had to add a little more space for the dialogue afterwards. That's Miyamura. I'm impressed.

Miyamura: Yes! Please write the conversation here in the magazine properly (laughs).

Anno: Asuka is a good character. I hadn't planned to put so much thought into her. The actor's feedback is very important in character creation, so Miyamura may have influenced the way Asuka turned out.

AM: She became thin and slender like an anorexic.

Anno: I heard that she actually gained weight, so I had to redo it. I'll have to fatten her up for the video version.

Miyamura: She's not in the muddy water, she's at the convenience store buying stuff.

Anno: Yeah, I didn't expect her to get so fat. I was not observant enough. I'm sorry.

Miyamura: You go that far?

Animation is not just about cels.

Anno: Another reason why I made the last episode like that was to free the celluloid animation. I didn't want to have a bunch of crazy anime fans thinking that if it's not cel, it's not anime.

AM: Anno-san himself was honed in the fields of independent production, special effects, and animation. You had experience in cine calligraphy, drawing directly on film, and paper animation.

Anno: I wanted to include cine calligraphy in episode 26, but there was no room.

AM: It's the same with the so-called "line-dori" (*3) style expression in episode 16.

- 3) A kind of dummy material or timing shot in the animation production process when the original material is not ready in time for editing, post recording, or sound work. It is also called "Shirosatsu".

Anno: I started with the idea of what it would be like to take a symbol called a word and turn it into a minimal image. It's an expression of the primitive word in my mind. As I make my living from animation, I thought it was an expression of the pure image of words. This is the only way I can make a documentary about myself. If you see that and think it's lazy, then I think you're done. You've been poisoned by commercial celluloid animation.

AM: Even if you notice that's a line-dori method, it should be easy to understand why they did it, if you look at it with normal senses.

Anno: Normal people called it a "surrealistic expression". Know-it-all people would say something boring like, "No, that's just animation with a line-dori, it's just a lazy thing," or "They couldn't get the drawing done in time."

AM: I'm sure it's easier to talk about it that way. Isn't it surprisingly difficult to look at a work of art and try to express what you think of it, or try to read something from it yourself? In other words, it would be easy to just say, "Oh, that was fun," or "The pictures were terrible today. I think there is a perspective that says what's wrong with being easy, because it's entertainment. But the truth is, if you look at it properly, you should be able to tell what happened at that point. But instead of going to that point, they just run away from it.

Miyamura: Viewers are doing that?

AM: Yes. I'm sure it would be a shock for those people to see the last episode. I think there were many keywords that led to the last episode. For example, why is episode 16 called "Deathly Sickness"? Do you know what episode 16 is? The one where Shinji is captured by the black sphere. It's hard to understand why it's a "disease leading to death". Why does it lead to death, when you're regenerating and living, when all you're doing is looking at your past?

Miyamura: Because it makes you want to die, doesn't it?

Anno: It's just pedantic (an act of showing off one's academic knowledge).

AM: To put it simply...

Anno: Pedantic (,which refers to words and actions that show off one's knowledge).

Miyamura: It sounds a lot like Peking duck, doesn't it?

Anno: Oh no, that's just as boring as it sounds.

AM: I was shocked.

Anno: Zero for Robocon!

(He's perfectly drunk.)

AM: It's getting pedantic (laughs). Miyamura, do you think it was good to work on Evangelion?

Miyamura: I do.

AM: Do you feel that something has changed in you?

Miyamura Yes, I do.

Anno: I, too, feel as if something has changed.

AM: What has changed, that's ....

Miyamura: God only knows what it is.

AM: I see.

Anno: I don't know how it's changed yet.

Miyamura: I don't know if it's good or not.

Anno: I don't know if it made me more positive or more negative. So I don't know if it's a good thing or a bad thing, but as a result, there's a lot of criticism and slander against me. It's not a good feeling to hear someone say bad things about you.

AM: If you can feel good about it, you're crazy.

Anno: But I wonder what it means to have started something in order to feel good about it, and then to have rejected it as a result. No matter what you make, when you decide to make it into a work of art, it can only be the director's masturbation. People who feel good by hurting themselves are the ones who create such works. How far can you go in commercial work without being noticed? When I came to my senses, I realized that all the staff were helping me masturbate. The director is the last dictator left in the age of democracy, just like Coppola. That's what Orson Welles said.

That's how it should have started, but it ended up with both sides in a lot of pain, and we didn't conclude it. I wonder what the reason was. I still don't have a clear answer as to why I did it. There are some reasons, but they are all different. It's not clear yet. I guess I hate myself because I'm so dependent. I never thought I'd be such a dependent man.

AM

....

Anno: I don't have a self. It's empty. This is especially true of my generation, but we have no self. The only common experience is television.

AM: You're afraid that if you conclude with this, it might prove that.

Anno: No, I don't think it's just about that either. It's more of a chaotic feeling. Also, I have a desire for destruction, I think. It's boring to have a clean ending.

Miyamura: You want to destroy things.

Anno: I've been doing this for a long time. I make clay, toys, plastic models, whatever, realistically, complete them, and then set them on fire and burn them.

Miyamura: That kind of momentary thing is wrong, but so am I. (laughs)

Anno: When I was in junior high school, it took me about a month to make a mock-up model of an airplane that would actually fly, and it was really beautiful when I lit it on fire and watched it fly. When it went into someone's house and almost caught fire, I panicked (laughs).

AM: Didn't it catch on fire this time?

Anno: Well, I guess so. I guess I just went to someone's house and got burned. I don't like things that are beautifully finished. It always has to be broken somehow. When I was a kid, I used to draw doodles in my notebook. I used to write "Getter Robo" or something like that, but after I drew it neatly, I would make sure to erase it with an eraser and rip off the arms and legs to make a picture of a pipe or something coming out of the inside.

And yet, I didn't do what everyone else did when I was a kid, such as wrenching the legs of frogs or making them hold firecrackers in their mouths and popping them. I didn't deny what my friends did. I watched them do it, but I never did anything like that myself. Instead, I always destroyed inorganic things. So, for me, animation is inorganic. So I think that's why I destroyed it. Well, I do have the urge to destroy. I guess I didn't want it to end nicely.

AM: You call animation inorganic, but there are people who have been involved in it, including Miyamura, and people who have watched it. You chopped it up.......

Anno: Miyamura, I chopped off after 24 episodes.

Miyamura: Ah, it was cut off and left there.

AM: It's especially bad for Miyamura-san. What will finally happen to Asuka? Is she going to be saved or is there going to be a new Asuka? But in the end, she just stayed in bed.

Miyamura: She was still asleep. The director cut me in half! That's right!

Anno: I guess I didn't love the character enough.

Miyamura: But I hope something happens in the video.

Anno: If you say so, Miyamura. I'm weak with women. I'm the type of person who is spoiled by women.

AM: You're weak with women.

Anno: I'm nothing. I'm totally weak. I realized it clearly this time. I didn't know I had nothing like this.

AM: Inside yourself?

Anno: In myself. I'm too dependent on anime. The words in episode 26 are all words that come back to me.

AM: Before starting Evangelion, Anno-san said that you wanted to make a film based on the idea that you had to make as many otaku as possible.

Miyamura: I didn't know he said that.

Anno: I think the otaku industry is going to get worse and worse, because it's just going to get blocked. Nowadays, there are no more TV anime for otaku, and everyone is using video as their primary source of entertainment. Video is something that you have to pay a certain amount of money to watch, so there will never be an unspecified number of people buying it, because only those who want to watch it will buy it.

At that point, there will be no reason to buy the video other than "I'll buy it because Yuko Miyamura is in the voice." Because everyone is making the same thing inside. When that happens, people who are not fans of Miyamura Yuuko will watch the anime. If that were to happen, the business of dealing with only a few thousand people would become a viable one, and that would be fine for a day-to-day living. But it will never be more than that, and it will never be less than that. It's just that that world is getting blocked.

Miyamura: I see. Making anime is anime fans. Becoming a voice actor is also an anime fan. Anime fans of anime fans.

Anno: The only way to make anime is for anime fans, by anime fans, and for anime fans. In this process, they become smaller and smaller. The only way to cope with this situation is to increase the number of people who buy our products, even if it is just one person, from an unspecified number. Even people who think they are ordinary people always have otaku elements, so we have to stimulate them and increase the number of people.

Miyamura: It was a success, wasn't it?

Anno: Yes, it was successful, but I started to hate it more than that, didn't I? I hated myself.

AM: It's not 100 million otaku-ization, but I think Evangelion is succeeding in its plan to make otaku more popular, at least until episode 24.

Anno: You don't know about episodes 25 and 26.

AM: I'd like to hear about the change of heart in those episodes the most.

Anno: I don't know what to say. I didn't have much time at all, I was so tired.

Miyamura: You were tired?

AM: In the beginning, you create otaku and lock them in a locked room. I wondered what it was like when that became unacceptable.

Anno :I guess I started to hate otaku. Also I hated myself.

AM: If you hate yourself, then you can't depend on yourself. It's not that "I don't", it's that "I can't".

Anno: I myself am dependent on animation. I haven't come up with my own ideas yet.

AM: Is this the flip side of your dependence on animation?

Anno: But I think that's okay, too. The final episode of a video or a TV program may be completely different, and the final episode of a theater may also be different. In the case of theaters, I think it's OK to be dependent. I don't know…

Miyamura: Dependency, huh?

Anno: It can't be helped, though, can it?

Miyamura: Admitting it is also ....

Anno: You have to honestly admit what you have. You can't do anything about what you can't do.

AM: I'm not going to try to summarize this discussion in a very harmonious way. We haven't finished "Evangelion" yet, we have the video, and you have to keep working on it. We can't come to a conclusion about "Evangelion" here. Was there anything left to say, Miyamura? You did say to the director, "Please do something about Asuka, who is being neglected."

Miyamura: I'm sure he'll do something about it in the video!

Anno: Don't get your hopes up.

AM: Thank you very much.

Hideaki Anno: The World of Neon Genesis Evangelion (SF Magazine 08/1996)

- Translation: Riki
- Source: http://anime-room.jp/modules/evangelion/eva-doc/siryou4-1.htm#top

This is a reconstructed version based on a discussion between Hideaki Anno and Nozomi Omori(*1) at the SF Seminar '96 held on April 28th.

- 1) A Japanese translator, book reviewer, critic, and anthologist who focuses on science fiction.

Omori: I'd like to start with a topic about why we talk about anime in a science fiction seminar in the first place.

Personally, I have been advocating the "New Real Science Fiction" since last year. At the core of this new Sci-Fi is

- "The Devil in Soliton" by Katsufumi Umehara
- "Hyperion" and "The Fall of Hyperion" by Dan Simmons
- "Neon Genesis Evangelion"

Of those works, Eva is the most representative of Japanese Sci-Fi today, and at the same time, it can be said to be at the forefront of modern Sci-Fi. If you talk about science fiction today, I think it's indispensable. But Anno-san probably doesn't think so.

Anno: Nope.

Omori: You don't. You don't have to agree with me at all (laughs), it's up to the viewer. Sci-Fi geek have their own way of watching Evangelion. So I'd like to analyze here a different view of Evangelion than the way anime geek sees it.

Anno: Thanks. By the way, I'm at a loss, probably here's not the right place for me.

Omori: I heard that you joined the SF convention at Hammacon(*2).

- 2) Japan SF Convention held in Yokohama

Anno: So far, that was the last one.

Omori: I was surprised to hear in the waiting room earlier that there's an episode called "Magma Diver," and that title is actually based on David Prynne's "Sundiver" (laughs).

Anno: Yes, it was taken from "Sundiver", but no one noticed. I haven't read it. I just read the cover blurb and thought it was cool. When you dive into the sun, there's something there. That's cool. I haven't read it though.

Omori: That's keen. If you have that sense, you can live well as a Sci-Fi geek (laughs). Now I'd like to survey the audience here.

Who in the audience is unfortunate enough to live in an unfortunate living/economic environment to have never seen a single episode of "Evangelion"? Please raise your hand.

Oh, that's not much, about 20%. Then, please raise your hand if you bought all three LDs?

Anno: Seriously? That's not as bad as I thought.

Omori: There are about the same number of people with a 0% synchronization rate and those with a 100%+ synchronization rate (laughs). That's an ideal distribution.

There may be some people who have never heard of it, so I'd like the director to explain it in a few words. What kind of anime is "Neon Genesis Evangelion"?

Anno: Oh well, I don't know.

Omori: In a nutshell, it's like a robot animation?

Anno: Hmmm, there's a robot in it. I can call it a robot animation, maybe.

Omori: For example, what if one of your relatives asked you "Shu-chan, what kind of animation have you been making lately? or something like that.

Anno: Well, I'd answer I'm making a robot animation (laughs).

Omori: What if they ask "Like in Mazinger Z?"

Anno: If they ask that, I'll tell them that it's like 'Gundam'. Gundam is famous, so if I say so, they'll understand.

Omori: A robot anime like Gundam?

Anno: Hmmm, well, it's quicker. It's easier to understand.

Omori: Gundam, in terms of Sci-Fi history, was an anime that achieved a certain degree of Sci-Fi realism, not the promised space combat of TV anime. From the space colony setting to the Minovsky particle that brought about the need for melee combat. Back in the day, robots didn't need any logic to fight.

Anno: So they've brought something like that to the table, and they've succeeded.

Omori: Yes, properly reasoned, and that's what made Sci-Fi geek love it.

Anno: Also, throwing away the word "robot" was a big deal. No matter how you look at it, it's a robot, but it's a mobile suit. It's so cool, isn't it?

Omori: Earlier, in a conversation with Omiya Nobumitsu(*3), Okada Toshio talked about it, didn't he? No matter how you look at it, it's just an ordinary building, but the AUM truth teach calls it "Satyam" (laughs). They said, "This is similar to Gundam, isn't it?"

- 3) He was the chairman of the executive committee of the Japanese SF convention "TOKON8" in 1982.

Anno: Yes, I think the way you use words is important. That's because it's a semiotic theory. I think so, too.

Omori: That's why it's called a humanoid battle weapon. And in the case of Eva, the kanji characters have a big impact.

Anno: It sure does. I'm not good at kanji, but it looks cool. It's good now we have a word processor. My rough drafts are all in hiragana. I don't know kanji very much.

Omori: It is groundbreaking in the sense that they used kanji with attention to typographic matters. For example, the way you put the chyron.

Anno: I was aiming for the coolness of the thing.

Omori: I think that's one of the reasons why it's so popular. Even in modern science fiction, the measure of "coolness" is becoming very important. It's because cyberspace and cybernetic space were so cool that William Gibson was so popular.

Anno: Yes, that's cool.

Omori: But if you think about not only the naming but also the framework of science fiction, the point is the fact that Eva is presenting a big theme, a big story about God and humanity. In the Japanese Sci-Fi of the 80's, there was a thought that the story should be no longer about a god or humanity. That you can't have reality in a big story like that. In the case of Eva, however, the vision of human evolution is clearly at the root of the story.

Anno: I got inspired by Mitsuse Ryu(*4) when I started.

- 4)Japanese Science Fiction Writers

Omori: Oh, it was Mitsuse Ryu? Rather than Komatsu Sakyo(*5)?

- 5) One of the leading science fiction writers in Japan, as well as one of the leading novelists of post-war Japan.

Anno: Not Komatsu-san but Ryu Mitsuse for that time.

Omori: He's famous for "Ten Billion Days and a Hundred Billion Nights"(*6).

- 6) A science fiction novel by Ryu Mitsuse

Anno: Yes he is. I read it again. Japanese Sci-Fi of that era was good, wasn't it? If I say so, it sounds terrible now, though. It's just that I rarely read.

Omori: In that sense, Mitsuse Ryu's sense of naming is also quite-

Anno: Good, right?

Omori: Yes, it is. It also has challenges that seem to anticipate cyberpunk. However, Mitsuse's world is more oriental in its view of impermanence, but Evangelion is more Western.

Anno: I'm not into Western civilization, you know. Somehow I don't trust Western civilization very much.

Omori: Is that as something to be denied?

Anno: It doesn't relate to me, so I can use it. If I were a Christian, I'd be too scared to use Christian stuffs.

Omori: Indeed. You don't have any attachments, so you can use the name of an angel. Like let's use this name because its sense of language sounds nice.

Anno: To equate apostles and angels is so much to complain about from a westerner's point of view. There is an American worker in our company, and he scolded me for many things, saying it was wrong. That's normal. But I didn't care about that and just did it.

Omori: On the other hand, I thought of it as a story to climb the human evolutionary ladder, from Clarke's "The End of Childhood" to Sakyo Komatsu, and more recently, Gregg Bear's "Blood Music".

Anno: I don't know. I don't think what I was trying to do was that big of a deal.

Omori: It does look like it's a big deal (laughs).

Anno: Oh yeah?

Omori: Because you say "Instrumentality of Mankind" (laughs) .

Anno: Only the wording is exaggerated. It's just cool when it's written in kanji:

人類補完計画.

THE SQUIRREL CAGE(*1)

1) The short story "The Squirrel Cage" (1966) is famous as a symbol of "New Wave science fiction" (*2). It also won the first (1970) Nebula Award for Best Foreign Short Story in Japan.

- 2) is a movement in science fiction produced in the 1960s and 1970s and characterized by a high degree of experimentation in both form and content, a "literary" or artistic sensibility, and a focus on "soft" as opposed to hard science.

Omori: In the case of science fiction fans, I suppose it's possible that they overreact to names chosen just because they sound cool. Especially when the title of the last episode, "The Beast that Shouted Love at the Heart of the World," appeared in the preview at the end of episode 25, there were many SF fans who were excited and said, "Oh, I'm glad I read SF" (laughs). Because they were able to tell the young anime fans who didn't know anything about it, "I didn't expect them to bring Harlan Ellison in the last episode. Don't you know it? Everyone knows about it. He's the coolest writer of the American New Wave science fiction." All science fiction fans are grateful to Anno (laughs). Did you choose the term "Instrumentality of Mankind" because of the sound of the words?

Anno: Yes, that's right. I haven't read that much Smith(*3), and I haven't read much SF lately. "Ender's Game" was the last one I read. I'm sorry that someone like me has come here.

- 3) it could be not Smith but Ellison.

Omori: However, unconsciously or not, I feel that there is a very high rate of synchronization with modern SF, for example, Dan Simmons' Hyperion, which I mentioned earlier. This work, along with its sequel, dominated the Japanese science fiction scene last year, and again, while using and quoting the necessary elements and parts of typical science fiction, it succeeded in creating a modern reality at the same time. Moreover, an important common feature is that this novel also avoids the ending, or rather, various mysteries appear, but it doesn't properly give answers to them (laughs).

Anno: I guess it's a trend. It's all happening at the same time. I've heard that a lot lately in movies.

Omori: In the case of anime, there have been many works in the past where the ending was avoided, or rather the ending was not given properly for various reasons. But in the case of science fiction novels, the mysteries up to that point are usually solved when they reach the end. In exceptional cases of unresolved science fiction, such as some of the New Wave science fiction works, the fact that the mystery is not resolved is interpreted as meaningful. In the case of Hyperion, however, the story is not completed in one book, but there is a sequel called The Fall of Hyperion, which develops the story on a grand scale again, but it doesn't end, and then there is another work called Endymion. And this time, apparently, it's going to be a trilogy (laughs). There is a suspicion that this one may never end, but it is highly evaluated in spite of that. This work also has a very high meaning of being in the science fiction genre, as it quotes from previous science fiction works.

In the case of Eva, robots are launched from an underground base with a lot of noise. There are many typical scenes that would make anime fans very excited. However, when making an anime that can also be appreciated by adults, these parts are usually the first to be discarded. For example, you can see this in Mamoru Oshii's "Ghost in the Shell", an anime adaptation of Masamune Shirow's "Ghost in the Shell", or in Katsuhiro Otomo's "Akira". Even though there is a difference between theatrical animation and TV animation, you have to abandon the otaku side of animation, the part that they like very much, and "pursue the possibilities of animation as a form of visual expression". In this sense, I feel that Evangelion shows a great deal of respect for its birthplace as a TV animation.

Anno: Well, it's animation, and animation is animation. But I can understand why Mamoru Oshii and others discard such things. He doesn't like anime, he doesn't believe in its potential. I also stopped believing in anime, and that's how I was able to create my current works. This is a difficult thing to understand, but when I think about animation, I think, "Oh, I can't do anything," and that's when Evangelion was born.

Omori: So you're saying that you believe in the possibilities of animation?

Anno: Yes, I do. I don't know why I get so wrapped up in it.

Omori: Did you believe in it when you were working on GunBuster?

Anno: Yes, I did. I thought that there was something in anime. There was a science fiction animated film called "Royal Space Force: The Wings of Honnêamise" that I was working on with Toshio Okada, and at the time it was not evaluated at all by the public.

Omori: I chose it as number one in Kinejun's (*4) top ten Japanese films (laughs).

- 4) A film magazine published by Kinema Junpo.

Anno: Yes, you were the only one who voted for it, weren't you?

Omori: Right. And Okada or someone got mad at me for it. He said that if I hadn't voted for it, it would have been recorded in history as a film that didn't get a single vote (laughs).

Anno: I'm not so sure about that. "GunBuster" was also in the top 10 of Kinejun, wasn't it? Well, it wasn't highly evaluated by the public at all, and especially by people in the animation industry. I was quite disappointed at that time.

Omori: In "The Wings of Honnêamise", you thoroughly eliminated the otaku aspect, didn't you?

Anno: Yes, the idea was to release it as a general film.

Omori: It's a so-called typical Japanese teen-film.

Anno: It's a good movie. It's not animation, it's a really good movie. But when it wasn't evaluated well, I thought to myself for the first time, "Maybe animation is hopeless". Then Original Video Animation started appearing more and more, and the animation world became more and more closed. I think it's the same with special effects films.

Omori: No, it's the same as science fiction.

Anno: I avoided using that word, but it's the same as science fiction, and just like science fiction, anime is becoming more and more closed.

Omori: That's why I felt that the current situation of anime and science fiction are rather synchronized.

Anno: Anime has become an industry where the creator and the buyer are fixed. So, if the creator makes something that feels good, the buyer will feel good too. If there are 10,000 people who are able to exchange a little over $100 economically with each other, then it's okay. It's an economy. In other words, both the creator and the buyer have stopped going out from there.

Omori: That's exactly what Katsufumi Umehara, the author of "Soliton's Demon," was saying earlier. Science fiction, too, has become a closed world between the writer and the reader.

Anno: I was fed up with seeing the animation industry closing down. With GunBuster, I tried to show something different that could be created by doing robot animation or science fiction. Also, negative opinions about parodies and such were becoming more and more widespread, so I wanted to try to show that even parodies can become a methodology.

I wanted to support the theory of parody. I didn't think about it that much at the time, but when I thought about it afterwards, I realized that our generation had nothing. The only thing we have is the TV, which is a square magic box in a 4.5 tatami mat room. From that box, we can watch all kinds of information, including news, in real time, such as Asama-Sanso (5), which is very important for our generation. We could watch gunfights, or in other words, kill each other, in real time. This was an amazing thing for a child. There was a device like this in the living room (he use the expression "cha no ma"(*6)), and although the word "cha no ma" may no longer exist, you could watch it in the living room.

- 5) Asama-Sansō incident
- 6) A room with tatami mats that serves as a living room and dining room in a Japanese style house. It is used for family meals and gatherings.

Manga and common experience in TV means that if you watch "Cutie Honey" on Saturday, when you go to school the next week, you won't be able to talk to your friends who are watching "It's 8 o'clock, All together!(*7)". In other words, you won't be able to socialize. I wanted to watch "Kikaider", but in order to talk with my friends, I had to endure watching "It's 8 o'clock, All together!" In order to talk to each other, we had to watch the same TV. I don't like "Kamen Rider" after episode 8, but I had to watch Rider 2 as well. If I didn't, I wouldn't be able to talk to my friends. Television is a common experience for us. It's the only thing that comes out as our words and our experiences. Anime, manga, and special effects TV programs are all we have.

- 7) A comedy and public variety show that aired every Saturday at 8:00 p.m. on the TBS network from October 4, 1969 to March 27, 1971, and from October 2, 1969 to September 28, 1985.

I believe that this is the situation that created the so-called otaku. But there are so many people who don't want to admit that. I think that's wrong. TV is all we have. This time, I started from the point of wondering what we could do if we admitted that.

Omori: It's true that we had to watch TV on Wednesdays to be able to talk (laughs). From last fall until March this year, Wednesdays were the day the world turned around. After the 6:30 p.m. broadcast of Eva, there were people who stayed on the phone until midnight, or people whose modems beeped and they went straight to the online service. It was definitely a common experience, or at least there was always the sense that we were sharing the same Eva experience.

Anno: Well, I guess that became the culture. I mean, it's definitely not beyond the borders of subculture. But that's all we have, so I guess it can't be helped.

The Beach at the End

Omori: I was going to save it until a little later, but at this point, I'd like to ask you about episode 25 and the final episode, which are unavoidable when it comes to Eva. I don't remember exactly, but Megumi Hayashibara said on a radio show why the story ended the way it did, "We didn't make something that anime otaku and anime fans wanted to watch, we made something that they had to watch."

Anno

Yes, that's right. "Go back to reality."

Omori: That's not a lie, that's an honest feeling?

Anno: I thought it would be better if they did. I'm going to do the same myself.

Omori:"Go back to reality."

Anno: Yes, I think it's good to go back to reality once and then go out again. Otaku only know the world of the otaku. I'm the same way, I don't know anything about the outside world. But when I feel that my own standards have reached their limits, I have no choice but to compare them with the standards of others and correct the errors.

Omori: Yes, there is a connection with what Umehara-san said. You have to get out there. You can't get something new just by staying in your room.

Anno:I think so. online services are dangerous (laughs).

Omori: That was also a very controversial statement, wasn't it, when you said it on the radio?

Anno: I do think so. I think that users should quickly realize that this is really dangerous. Users need to realize that they are in a dangerous place. It's okay for users to be aware of this. The problem is that there are too many users who are not aware of it. It's like graffiti in a toilet. The response goes on forever. I think the problem is that there are both trivial graffiti and very good comments in the same place.

The valuable information that we really need to find is getting lost in the huge volume of responses. Both positive and negative information are in the same place and cannot be differentiated. So, I think it's not good that they have the same value set. There is also no way to verify this.

I think the online service media has a lot of potential for development, but I'm concerned that the users are too childish. Of course, there are normal users, too.

Omori: But when you talk about the 25th and final episode of Evangelion, did you cut out all the non-otaku viewers?

Anno: Yes, I cut them off.

Omori: For example, for a person who has three children, a happy family, and is happily going to work every day to earn money, this episode was almost unnecessary, wasn't it?

Anno: For people like that, it's an episode they don't need, isn't it?

Omori: And the people who should receive that kind of message are mainly the people who don't want to be told such things.

Anno: Yes, I think so.

Omori: Of course you knew that the people to whom you would convey your message would be the people who would be most offended by it, didn't you?

Anno: Well, they're going to be offended, and well, I don't really know if this is right or not (laughs). But I said that to myself. That was a regression to the self. When I think about it again, in the end, it's like I was going to push forward at once, but I ended up getting caught in a sense of being trapped. That's where I found peace, or rather, where I ended up.

Omori: What about the applause at the end?

Anno: That's not very good, is it?

Omori: Shouldn't we think of that as a relief or a happy ending?

Anno: Well, I suppose there are people who think it's a happy ending. In the end, I myself didn't feel so happy.

Omori: A lot of things happened before the 25th and final episode, didn't they? For those of you who don't know much about it, there is a book called "Dead Sea Scrolls", and according to the prediction, 16 angels will attack and if you fight them and defeat them all, "the Human Instrumentality Project" will be launched. There was a lot of foreshadowing that various organizations were plotting behind the scenes.

In episode 24, the last Angel was defeated, and all the mysteries were finally revealed. Just as I was getting excited, episode 25 started, and suddenly there was a boy sitting alone in a place like a gymnasium. The spotlight shines on him, and the characters behind him throw various words at him. That's what they keep doing in episode 25 and the last episode.

Well, there are some interesting parts in the last episode, like the parallel world school version of Fredric Brown's "What Mad Universe". Anyway, I was simply very surprised. If it was an experimental film, I could understand, but I don't think there's any example of a TV animation, or commercial film, that has done something that crazy.

Anno: Well, I suppose so.

Omori: Normally, you wouldn't do something like that if you knew it would cause trouble. It's not uncommon to see a serialized story in a weekly shonen manga magazine get cancelled, and the end of the story is a mess. But this is completely different from that. In the radio show, you mentioned something about a "live feeling," but for episode 25 and the final episode, it's clear that you were able to create exactly what you intended as a director.

Anno: Yes, that's right.

Omori: Didn't you have any objections or anything like that (laughs)?

Anno: Well, you know, "It's better than not making it to air" (laughs). There are many ways to do it, but in terms of the schedule, early in December, at the end of November, the schedule collapsed.

Omori: In science fiction, for example, in Stephen Baxter's Timelike Infinity, there is a story in which everything settles on a fact observed by the last observer. If we take it that way, the 25 episodes and the final episode will make all the 24 episodes of Eva up to that point be read in a completely different direction. In other words, the wave function ended up converging on a "reality" that anime fans were not expecting. In other words, the reason for the existence of the Eva is that it was requested in order to show people who can only achieve self-realization by riding it. Or, the Human Instrumentality Project was a device that made it possible to depict the inner thoughts of the characters in such a way at the end.

Anno: Well, it's possible, but I don't recommend it (laughs).

Omori: I had been watching it believing that it was science fiction, so I was a bit shocked at the end. I kept wondering how I could say that it was science fiction until the end (laughs). After watching episode 25 and the last episode, how can I still say that Evangelion is the cutting edge of modern science fiction? The conclusion was that it was a story of inner space (laughs). That's why I decided to claim that it was New Wave science fiction (laughs).

Anno: But that's not wrong. It's my inner space after all. So that's not wrong.

Omori: Abandoning the outer space of "fighting the enemy as an Eva pilot" and seeking the frontier in the inner space. Or are you saying that in the end that is the most important part of the story?

Anno: No, I think that I had no choice but to escape into a regression into myself. If I didn't do that, I would have had to die or go insane because I was under a lot of pressure mentally. It's a miracle that I'm here now. I'm amazed I didn't die, though I did have a close one.

Omori: Is that so?

Anno: Yes, my mental state was in danger once.

Omori: In terms of episodes, Shinji Ikari, the main character, has trouble communicating in his relationships with people, and has major problems with his father. There were several possibilities for such a boy to be happy, weren't there?

Anno: I don't know. For a while after I finished the film, I really couldn't think of anything, so I haven't examined it that much yet. I need to examine it and start over again. I need to start over again after episode 21. I finally realized that I was going crazy. I was going crazy, you know.

Omori: Well, there was a lot of talk here and there about a "director's completion plan" (laughs). They were wondering if you were all right.

Omori: Well, there was a lot of talk here and there about a "director's completion plan" (laughs). They were wondering if you were all right.

Anno: I wasn't all right. It was obvious that I was crazy. That came out in the film as it was, and it was broken. Well, that brokenness is also beautiful in a way.

Omori: In short, TV animation is an expressive medium where it is difficult for an artist's personality to come out in that form. In the case of a novel, even if it's messed up at the end, it's still your problem, and if the editor approves it, it can be turned into a book. But with anime, there are usually a lot of checks and balances, so it's rare to see an artist's personality come out in such a straightforward way.

Anno: Well, that's true. The fact that I'm in charge of everything is also a problem, though.

Omori: Well, I guess there's no end to it if we start talking about it. There's so much to talk about, and so little time left (laughs).

Anno: That's right.

Omori: If we start "The Case of Hideaki Anno," it will probably still take about five hours.

Anno: It took me about 12 hours yesterday.

Omori: I heard that there were some things that came into view after talking with manga artist Taeko Watanabe for 12 hours yesterday.

Anno: She's really nice, isn't she?

Omori: That's quite an amazing. Now, sorry for the audience but I guess there is no time for me to ask "What is the secret of the Spear of Longinus?"

Anno: I only can tell you that you'll have to wait for the video to solve the mystery. I haven't heard if the video will be released, but at least the LD will be released.

Only one brilliant way to do it.

Omori: Well, let's talk about the future. One LD is released every month, with two episodes each, right? Are you going to fix a lot of the episodes in the second half?

Anno: From episode 21, I'll try to fix as much as possible.

Omori: What makes you do that?

Anno: There are quite a few parts that I had to cut down on. After that, there are almost no robots in the story. The reason is that there were no more people who could draw robots.

Omori: Everyone couldn't work anymore?

Anno: No, in episode 19, everyone worked together on the drawings.

Omori: You mean that everyone couldn't work anymore after the Longinus Spear was thrown?

Anno: Well, that's really true. After that, a little bit appeared in episode 24. That's what I mean when I say it feels like a live performance. It's about who's going to help me now. That's the most effective use of the staff.

Omori: The only way is to play with the band members who are there.

Anno: When the 6-4-2-2 strings(*1) are gone, we have no choice but to play with just the pets(?). I had no choice but to play the guitar solo today. If the plan was to start with a full orchestra, but only about 10 people showed up, and there were only three of us left, we would have to keep playing what we could with just the three of us. Sometimes, if other people came, we would change the music to suit them.

- 1) In the field of string recording for pop music, we often see the formation of 6-4-2-2 (6 first violins, 4 second violins, 2 violas, 2 cellos).

Omori: Even if there were only three of you, you had the option of playing the same song.For example, you could have used Ritsuko's narration, or a dialogue between Ritsuko and Gendou, or you could have used only the lines and played the riddle, but instead you changed the performance drastically?

Anno: We didn't really change the show, we just did what we thought was best for the moment. We give top priority to cost performance.

Omori: For the LD version, did you invite the strings again?

Anno: Well, now that I have a little more time, I thought I'd do something like that. After all, the staff hadn't put everything they had into the film. If there was anything left over, I thought it would be good to put it all out there. Anyway, when we started Evangelion, one of the reasons was to do everything we wanted to do so that everyone would feel refreshed.

Omori: The staff did everything they wanted to do and felt refreshed.

Anno: Yes, of course. Because this is television, and the money they get is very small. It's far beyond the category of television. No one would normally do this kind of work. But they are willing to do it just because it looks interesting. It's a very hard work for them. If the storyboards I submit are boring, the staff will quit. It's not about money. We were connected only by the fun of the work. Even so, it was very hard work considering the cost of living. Well, thanks to the sales of LD, I'm going to give as much back to the staff as I can. I think that's what I have to do from now on. I don't think I'll be giving money only to the scriptwriters like other productions.

Omori: So, just to be clear, I guess you could say that LD has guaranteed fair compensation for your labor?

Anno: Well, to tell you the truth, I had prepared a lot of hard work for the 25th and final episode. I knew I couldn't do any more. According to my usual pattern, before the last episode, I usually do the maximum amount of fighting.

Omori: Yes, that's right.

Anno: There's no way I could have done more than nineteen episodes in a quarter of the time, with half the staff. I think this is a really cunning part of me, but I think it's better to destroy the work with a score of minus 100 points than to produce a work with a score of 5 points and be criticized (laughs). This was easier from a mental standpoint for me. The result was very hurtful, but I didn't care anymore. At that time, I would rather receive a minus 100 points than a 5 point unwillingly. Well, that's just my style, but I hate it. When I'm working on a 1000-piece jigsaw and I can't find the last piece, I turn the whole thing over.

Omori: I see.

Anno: I'm the type of person who acts in a way that destroys himself. Well, now that I think about it, that was part of it.

Omori: In that sense, do you think it was a very typical ending for you?

Anno: Well, I guess so.

Omori: Are you satisfied with it in that sense?

Anno: I was satisfied at the time, but now I have a lot to think about.

Omori: There might be good things for people who still have unfulfilled feelings.

Anno: Maybe not (laughs).

Omori: So you're saying that you want people to wait for the LD version to be completed?

Anno: It's scheduled to be released by February of next year. Well, I have no idea what will happen.

Omori: Unfortunately, the time has already come, but in conclusion, do you mean that Evangelion is not over yet?

Anno: Well, I finished it once. But I have to start it all over again. And when that's done, I have to start again. It's really hard.

Omori: Is the engine starting to work?

Anno: No, I've been turning the starter, but it doesn't start very well.

Omori: I'm looking forward to it. Thank you very much for your time.

Anno: Thank you very much.

Additional excerpts

- Translated by Riki
- Source: https://bunshun.jp/articles/-/42777

At the "SF Seminar" held on April 28, 1996, after the TV broadcast had ended, Anno said, "I had prepared an overwhelming amount of content. I knew I couldn't go any further.". Although the details are not given, it is believed that this was the prototype of the "theatrical version" (now called "The End of Evangelion", but since we are dealing with the period before the "Rebuild of Evangelion" project, we will use the name "theatrical version" at the time of its release).

With the work speed slowing down, Anno considered ending the broadcast without completing it, and releasing the final part only on laser disc or video. Alternatively, he could have left the mystery of the Human Instrumentality Project behind, and let Asuka recover and Shinji be relieved of his emotional burden, which would have been a safe conclusion. However, Anno says that the ending was based on the idea that "I would rather have a minus 100 point ending than a 5 point ending.".

Hideaki Anno: Interview on "Neon Genesis Evangelion" (STUDIO VOICE 10/1996)

- Translation: Riki
- Source: https://web.archive.org/web/20120128161226/http://johakyu.net/lib/2007/07/2007-07-27-000536.php

Interviewer: Hiroki Azuma

The controversy over "Evangelion" continues to grow, involving not only anime fans but also the ideological scene. What is the meaning of the plotless development and ending that director Anno attempted in the 6:30 p.m. TV Tokyo anime?

In 1995, "Neon Genesis Evangelion" was the first work to emerge from the anime world that attracted much attention and buzz. Even after the TV broadcast ended, its reputation continued to grow. The Laser Disc/Video Tape versions of the second half of the episodes (the last two episodes) will finally be released in the fall. The English version of the video has already been released. A compilation of the movie version has been released for next spring's release. In addition, the excitement for the new theatrical version in the summer has never stopped. I interviewed Hideaki Anno, who wrote the original script and directed the film. The following is a small part of the two-hour interview.

I have no boring professionalism.

--After the success of your last work, "Nadia, The Secret of Blue Water" [TV series, 89-90], there was a five-year silence. During that time, did you have a vague sense that the "Eva" you were going to make would go beyond the boundaries of normal animation, or that it would break the boundaries of normal animation in a good way?

Anno: That's a good question. First of all, the inspiration for the Eva project was rather the failure of "Nadia". It's not that the work itself was a failure, but in my mind, it was a failure.

--What do you mean by that?

Anno: From the very beginning, Nadia was a work that was created on the basis of excuses. From the planning stage, there was already a plan to make "Castle in the Sky" on TV. I didn't want to do that, so I made this film by process of elimination. In my opinion, it was a failure. I'm sorry to the staff. After that, a number of projects were proposed to me, but after "GunBuster" [OAV, 88-89] and "Nadia," my stock of similar type of animation was exhausted, and the subjects that other people were coming up with were also the same. In the end, I had no choice but to do everything myself, including the planning, the director, the producer, and the original story. That's when King Records approached me and I started the TV series.

--At that stage, that hopeless development in the second half of "Eva" is still ...

Anno: It wasn't like that. I was making a more casual, standard robot animation.

--So you didn't have the sense to criticize anime fans who use anime as a refuge?

Anno: The feeling of being stuck and unable to see the future had been there since "GunBuster". I was devastated when our (GAINAX) first work, "Royal Space Force: The Wings of Honnêamise" [1986], failed. The people who watch anime don't want that kind of work. It was a failure in terms of advertising strategy, even for some people who don't watch anime. So I made "GunBuster" with the irony that "okay, people want to see a robot and a half-naked girl go into space."

--I can see that clearly by watching it. But despite all that, "Eva" is still full of pretty girls, robots, mysterious cult devices, and other strategies to get sales. Didn't you predict that if you did that again, it would destroy you?

Anno: No, because I like it too (laughs). In that sense, I have no boring professionalism. My first priority is to make things interesting. I don't care if I fail, I just want to try as hard as I can. If it's only 26 episodes of animation, I might be able to endure it if I concentrate on it for a short period of time. I didn't care too much about the result, though it's better than nothing.

--So you didn't have any intention to make a beautiful ending as a work. How is the work doing at the box office?

Anno: We have a fixed fan base, so we'll get 20K. I'm OK with that.

--Do you think it will become a big movement?

Anno: I didn't know that Japan was so sick. If our films get more than 10% viewership and sell 20K LDs, Japan is finished (laughs).

"""The methodology of making animation close to live-action is now outdated.""

--Let me ask you about other artists. First of all, what is your opinion on Mamoru Oshii?

Anno: I don't think highly of him. "Patlabor 2: The Movie" was good, though. I mean, I know him, so I don't rate him personally.

--What about "Ghost in the Shell"?

Anno: I haven't watched it yet.

--What is your opinion of Hayao Miyazaki?

Anno: He left animation and joined the Japanese film industry, which is boring.

--Is it noticeable after "My Neighbor Totoro"?

Anno: No, there were still some good things about him until "Totoro". I like the relaxed atmosphere of that movie. Castle in the Sky is my least favorite. I don't feel like watching it these days. I had high expectations for Porco Rosso, but it had some commercial stuff in it and was trying to look cool. That's what didn't work for me.

--What about the short film "ON YOUR MARK," which was released at the same time as "Whisper of the Heart"?

Anno: There is one very good shot of a girl's expression, but other than that, I feel the expression is old-fashioned. Also, it has "Studio Ghibli Experimental Studio" at the beginning. That's sad. If you don't add the word "experimental," you're not even allowed to show that. Being a brand name is hard, isn't it? He's trying to get out of it with his next work, "The Princess Mononoke". So I'm looking forward to that. The rest is the seventh volume of "Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind" comics. It's his best work to date.

--I see. What are some of the influences of live-action films on you? Please tell us about the fast-paced cut-scenes, especially in the latter half of the series.

Anno: That was influenced by the director Kihachi Okamoto. I was influenced by his tempo. After all, animation is a drawing, so there is a limit to the amount of information. There is a methodology to increase the amount of information by drawing details on one screen and making it realistic, thereby keeping the viewer in focus. We started it, and in short, it is a way to make animation more like live action. Katsuhiro Otomo, Hayao Miyazaki, and now Mamoru Oshii all use this method. But I think those methods are outdated. I believe that such cutting is necessary, but not for every cut. The problem is the rhythm that controls the picture as information, and it is the same with music. Change the picture rhythmically at a timing that feels good when you watch it. It is important to feel good at the moment of the cut change.

--So you're saying that it's more about direction than drawing?

Anno: Drawing is important, but it's not the only thing. It's the rhythm. It's very close to music. It's a biological thing.

A constant and tense battle against regulations

--Compared to other genres, the quality of "Eva" is quite high. Did you have any expectation of that kind of evaluation?

Anno:I didn't have any expectations, but I did have hopes. I've never been able to be proud of my work or my anime works to people who don't watch anime. After "Space Battleship Yamato," it seemed like anime fans were being accepted by the public. My generation was happy about that. But it was an illusion. The illusion of public recognition has led to the current failure. When we buy anime goods, we should be embarrassed. It should be embarrassing for a person over 20 to buy Sailor Moon anime goods, but they buy them without hesitation. That illusion still exists today. The truth is, it's not just embarrassing, it's ridiculous.

We anime fans are the ones who are the furthest away from the world. That's why I decided to make work that I could be proud of, or at least not embarrassed by, even for people who don't know about anime. I was trying to create something within the animation category that I wouldn't be ashamed to show to the world. The target age range was 30 plus or minus 10, that is, from 20 to 40 years old. Those over 40 are the generation before Space Battleship Yamato was broadcasted. There is no anime for that generation, so I removed them from the target age range.

--Miyazaki and Oshii went in the direction of abandoning the anime style, so to speak, in order to appeal to people other than anime fans. You, on the other hand, went in the direction of convincing people by using mecha and beautiful girls to a high standard.

Anno: As a result, yes.

--By the way, there are a lot of posts on NIFTY(*1) saying that they don't like the second half of the story, they don't like to see Aska suffer. I have a lot of feelings about that character, too.

Anno: I like her too (laughs).

--She's good. By the way, I felt something strongly in my heart when I saw the reaction of those anime fans. Non-anime fans are rather moved by the necessity of the main character's death. However, the people inside the anime are more frightened or nervous about this development. Did you take this into consideration?

Anno: I didn't really take that into account. The principle purpose of watching TV is pleasure. In short, we watch TV because it makes us feel good. Having grown up with television as such a medium, I can understand why people close the shutters when they see something unfamiliar. They want to see a cheerful Asuka, not a suffering Asuka. They feel uncomfortable and turn off the TV. Nowadays, people have a narrow view. When I did a little violence in episode 18, I was criticized. I guess they are not used to seeing blood and dead bodies.

--In episode 20, the sex scene between Misato and Kaji was shown for more than 30 seconds with only their voices. Were you planning to break the self-imposed restrictions of TV anime?

Anno: At that time, I was under pressure. There are always restrictions. It was a tense battle. But sex is a basic human right. I don't agree with the idea that it is wrong for anime characters to have sex.

--What do you think about the attachment that anime fans have to the characters?

Anno: Already during the production of "Gundam," the director Yoshiyuki Tomino (*2) made the core point that his work was just giving anime fans a place to parody. I felt the same way with "Sailor Moon". There is no substance in that anime. Just characters and a minimal world. In other words, there are only dolls and a sandbox, and you are free to make sand mounds and characterize the dolls. It's a very user-friendly playground for animation fans. I think it's perfect for people who want to create their own animation but can't make it themselves. There is a lot of room in anime for them to do that. Eva" was good in this respect. Characters are just symbolism, after all.

--I think Mamoru Oshii at one time had the same perception, do you feel sympathy for him?

Anno: No, I don't really feel it in terms of the work. He brings images from Shuji Terayama(*3) and many other places. It's a place that anime fans don't know, so it seems to be original. I think he doesn't have anything in his mind either. Manga with original author (*4) is more interesting.

--I see. Returning to the previous point, there is a paradox that outside the animation industry, works that do not look like animation, such as those of Mamoru Oshii and Katsuhiro Otomo, or works that join the group of Japanese films, such as those of Hayao Miyazaki, are highly valued. Do you think that "Eva" will be a breakthrough?

Anno: I think we've taken a half step forward, and now Studio Voice has come to interview us (laughs).

- 1) An online service service that was operated by NIFTY Corporation from 1987 to 2006.
- 2) Japanese animation director, director, screenwriter, manga author, lyricist, and novelist. He was involved in the production of "Mighty Atom," Japan's first half-hour animated television series, and has known the Japanese TV animation industry since its early days. His representative works include the Gundam series such as "Mobile Suit Gundam", "Space Runaway Ideon", "Aura Battler Dunbine", and other works related to Byston Well.
- 3) Japanese poet and playwright. He is the leader of the theatrical laboratory "Tenjo Sajiki". He has been called "an alchemist of words" and "one of the four heavenly kings of underground theater," and in addition to the above, he has been active in multiple fields and has published a vast amount of literary works.
- 4) Manga with original author is a term for works that have an original author who develops the story and character settings separately from the manga artist who draws the pictures.

The relationship between me and the world is vague.

--Finally, I would like to ask you one more question about the setting of your work. The enemy "Angel" sometimes looks like a pyramid, a glowing ring, or a virus, but it doesn't have a concrete image. What was your intention behind this?

Anno: I paradoxically expressed things that don't have a form as enemies. In my mind, "enemy" is vague, because the relationship between me and the world is vague. I think it's like a system, but on the other hand, the older generation of adults taught me that there's nothing you can do if you fight against the system.

--It's very close to the image of the enemies of Aum Shinrikyō(*1), isn't it?

Anno: Aum and I are of the same generation, I think. I'm surprised you caught that.

--I'm about 10 years younger than you, but from my point of view, your generation really seems to have a strong sympathy for Aum. But don't we have to distinguish between what you call "Aum-like things" and actual Aum?

Anno: We have been trying to find reasons to explain their behaviour or expressing strong emotions by creating "Aum-like things". The people who were in the Aum did not do that. They really hated the world and left it of their own free will and practiced the teachings of the cult in a closed environment. It would have been better if the group's lower level desires had been replaced by higher level religious activities. But they went on spinning their wheels more and more, and eventually destroyed themselves. They had some skills, but the organization as a whole was useless.

--In Gundam, the main character, Amuro Ray, has a clear enemy and a clear political structure that encourages his growth, but "Eva" doesn't have that.

Anno: From a generational point of view, I myself don't have that concept anymore. I don't trust politics or society. I can't create works that adopt what is not there. So, even if I were to adopt "Gundam" and use it in a way that is not yet my own, I would not be able to create anything better than "Gundam." I have to eliminate what I don't have, but the frustration of not having it is what keeps my wheels spinning in the story. I could only create stories about us moratorium people. The only real originals in this world are our own lives.

--As adopting political structures is now a parody, being thorough in spinning your wheels is what is most applicable to reality. Perhaps the final episode that received criticism needs to be revisited from that perspective.

The next day, Anno left for the US to attend an event. I would like to take this opportunity to thank him again for taking the time out of his busy schedule to give me an interview.

(June 24, 1996 at GAINAX)

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- 1) Aum Shinrikyo is a cult disguised as an emerging religion and a criminal terrorist organization. It is commonly known as "Aum." Its roots are in the Aum Shinzen no Kai, a yoga circle founded in 1984 by its guru, Shoko Asahara (real name: Chizuo Matsumoto). It became a hot topic when Asahara claimed to be able to float in the air through zazen.

In 1987, the group was reorganized into the religious organization Aum Shinrikyo. Asahara appeared on various TV programs as a religious figure.

In 1990, Asahara and his followers formed the "Truth Party" and ran for the House of Representatives, attracting attention for their unique campaign activities, but all of them were not elected.

In 1989, Asahara and his followers brutally murdered a lawyer, Tsutsumi Sakamoto, and dumped his entire family in the mountains. In addition to this, they were involved in other heinous crimes and anti-social activities, and eventually began to seek to overthrow the state and establish a dictatorship under Asahara.

In 1990, completely ignoring the principle of separation of church and state, they formed the Truth Party and ran for election to the House of Representatives, but were all unsuccessful. This is said to have encouraged the cult to become even more devoted to terrorism.

They committed murders and acts of terrorism with chemical weapons such as sarin, VX gas, and phosgene, which are relatively easy to produce if you have the knowledge, and shook Japan with violent incidents such as the assault and death of a departing believer.

Hideaki Anno: Eva Special Talk with Anno Hideaki and Toshiya Ueno (Newtype 11/1996)

- Translated by Riki
- Source: http://anime-room.jp/modules/evangelion/eva-doc/ecom4.htm

text by KANIO UCHIDA & TADON YAMADA (YAMADA PRODUCTION)

Toshiya Ueno / Born in 1962. Critic. Associate professor at Chubu University(*1). Majoring in Social theory, Cultural Studies and Media Studies. Writes in a wide range of genres such as "Studio Voice", "NAVI", and "Eureka". Author of "Red Metal Suit" and many others.

- 1) He's a professor at Wako University in 2020.

Hideaki Anno / Born in 1960. The next time you can hear the voice of Anno will be on Bunka Broadcasting System's "RADIOEVANGELION" (tentative) on November 3rd (Sun.) from 6:30 p.m. It is scheduled to air for two hours straight, with talks with the lead voice actors and a mini-drama!(*2)

- 2) Needless to say, it was aired in 1996.

The "Magic box" with the cold generation

-The "Evangelion" debate knows no bounds. Looking over the entire film in light of the controversial final two episodes, it's hard to say that the story of "Evangelion" is complete. Since "Eva" has disappeared, leaving many mysteries in its wake, fans have been filling in the gaps in their minds with "riddle solving". As a hint for solving the riddle, they seek out the words of director Anno Hideaki, who is considered to be "the Eva that exists today". While literature and paintings have their own way of being understood by readers, knowing the author of the work can expand our view of the work. For this reason, Anno is now being asked questions in a variety of media, including magazines and radio. This interview will be an important part of the conversation in learning about Anno's personality and his work "Eva".

-Our interviewer this time is Mr. Toshiya Ueno, an assistant professor at Chubu University, specializing in the history of social thought, and a well-known author of "Gundam FIX" on this magazine. He is a big anime fan and is of the same generation as director Anno, and says that "Eva" contains the essence of his generation.

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Ueno: I think "Ultraman" and "Kamen Rider" are too big for our generation. I feel that people who like cars, or machines, or science fiction in general, are overwhelmingly imprinted. The first thing that comes to mind is the overwhelming imprinting of images from childhood, such as machines, monsters or funny-looking things come out and destroy the town, influence the formation of personality and the direction of behavior without even realizing it. I feel "Evangelion" is similar to that, too.

Anno: Yes, I think that's true. I think the only common experience of our generation (born in the early '60s) is TV and manga. I don't blame them for that. Before us, there was the generation of Zenkyoto, who had a bad run-in with the Metropolitan Police Department, and then retreated to the tiny studio apartment to sing folk songs. For the generation before that, the overwhelming common experience was WW2 and the post-war period. They said they were going to rebuild Japan from the burnt ruins of nothing. That kind of power is amazing, isn't it? But we only have something to talk about in the "Magic box". It's shameful, but it can't be helped. I think this's where we have to start.

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-From the first episode, the technique of effectively portraying Eva and the Apostle's immense size is strongly influenced by special effects such as "Ultraman". The last scene in the first episode, in which EVA-01 stabs Shamsiel to death, is also impressive with the silhouettes of the two bodies in the dark.

（1） In 1951, the "Security Treaty Between the United States and Japan" established U.S. military bases in Japan under the name of defending the Asian region, but at first Japan was treated as a sacrificed place in the war. People got angry and demanded that the treaty be amended, which was commonly referred to as "Anpo". Inspired by this, students also became active in the movement against the university's unreasonable system. The students' organization was called "Zenkyoto" and their activities were called the "Student activism".

The Stone-cold Generation

-After WW2 and the era of student activism, Japan experienced a period of rapid economic growth but cultural emptiness at the same time. There, they were given the "Magic box" named television for the first time, but it did not have the same reality that their predecessors had experienced. While looking at the box coldly and saying "We know that," they feel that the box has some invisible power.

Ueno: When you watch "Ultraman", you know that it is a costume from the first place. But in the case of Kamen Rider and Ultraman, I think there is a certain sensibility that it's not bad at all if you can see the zipper. There's a certain trust and faith that there might be monsters. But on the other hand, there's a very cold feeling that they're just "objects", that they're just wearing them. I think there is also an imprint of an aesthetic sense of coolness in wearing it.

Anno: Yeah. There is a certain amount of coldness to it. News show is real one. There is a bias that cartoons and dramas are fake ones. But news show is not always telling a true thing, either. But I could experience the realism of the Asama-Sansō incident(*3) and the Yasuda Auditorium incident(*4) in real time in the living room. It's just a virtual thing after all, but I thought television was amazing. At a time when the only entertainment for children was television and comics, they were trying to make the most of it. The TV, the program itself, became the playground. That's why I didn't want to see things that were inconvenient, such as zipper, and I would look for reasons to make them consistent. There was a follow-up to Shonen magazines, but in the past, we used to imagine what was missing in the show in our own way to supplement it.

- 3) It was a hostage crisis caused by Marxist Revolutionary Left Wing student group and police siege at a mountain lodge in Nagano Prefecture, Japan, which lasted from February 19 to February 28, 1972. The police rescue operation on the final day of the standoff was the first marathon live television broadcast in Japan, lasting 10 hours and 40 minutes. On February 28, the police stormed the lodge. Two police officers were killed in the assault, the hostage was rescued and the criminal group was taken into custody. The incident contributed to a decline in popularity of leftist movements in Japan.
- 4) Zenkyoto and New Left students occupied Tokyo University, Hongo campus and Yasuda Auditorium. The Metropolitan Police Department was asked by the university to conducted the unblockage on January 18, 1969 and January 19, 1969.

A "betrayal experience" seen in a Magic box

Ueno: The generation that spent their youth during WW2, or our parents' generation, born in 1926 to 1934, experienced the "betrayal" of the public. Japan was a militaristic country but suddenly became a democracy after the surrender. The teachers and soldiers who were advocating "Anti-Americanism" yesterday have suddenly changed their minds and are now advocating freedom and equality. That's a great fictional experience, or it's an experience of betrayal. However, our generation has taken those days as a story on TV or in movies, so it's kind of a fiction. So I feel like our generation has never really experienced betrayal.

Anno: So things are happening "in the box" for our generation. We've just been watching it quietly. Or we're hearing about what teachers and parents have actually experienced. After August 15(*5), 51 years ago, the values and systems of Japan as a whole changed drastically. Japan lost the war for the first time by fighting an external enemy. It was the first time in the more than 2000 years of history that Japan got disappeared. But even with that first experience, Japan was able to endure the situation without being destroyed. I think Japan is a lucky country, but it's also the nature of the Japanese people that if the higher-ups change, they will follow them. Because we've heard those stories first-hand, the change in values after the war is imprinted in our knowledge. I think this was a big thing for us. It made us realize that there is no certainty in the world.

- 5) In general, August 15 is considered the last day of WW2 in Japan.

The early days of television and the current situation

-In their generation, "the only common experience is television," TV dramas from the '60s and '70s play an important role in the formation of personality. Having grown up watching television, they feel uncomfortable with today's TV programs compared to the ones from the old days.

Ueno: It is generally said that "Ultra Q", "Ultraman" and "Ultra Seven" were very serious because the scriptwriter was from Okinawa(*6), or there were subtle shadows in the story, or Shinichi Hoshi was a member of the planning team, etc. That's true, but we were too young to see the social movements behind the pollution, the oil shock, the dollar shock, the Vietnam War, or the failure of various student activism in Japan.

But in "Iron King" and "Silver Mask" and other special effects (after "Ultraman"), there is another kind of seriousness. This time, we know about the oil crisis and all sorts of social events, and we watch these films with a knowledge of them. In "Iron King", there's a group called the Shiranui Clan that holds a grudge against the Yamato Court, and a radical group called the Independence Party, which reflects the times and is different from the seriousness of the old "Ultraman" and "Seven", but it touches on something very concrete. In the case of "Rainbow Man", there is a "death squad" that kills only Japanese. These are distinguishable from "Ultraman" and "Seven".

- 6) In the past, people from Okinawa were often treated unfairly in the Japanese mainland. When the number of migrant workers from Okinawa to mainland Japan increased from 1910 to the '30s, job ads and store entrances sometimes says "Japanese only" because of their language and custom, for example their Japanese has extremely strong accents at the time or they have different sense of time, which called Okinawan time, like you never see your friend shows up on time.

Anno: Systematically, the work in the early '60s speaks of the future. This was a time when Japan was in an upbeat, fearless and uplifting mood, so everyone feels that our future is bright. The year of Ultraman was also set in 1993. I'm the same age as Jamila (laughs). And "Seven" was also set in the late '80s. Those two films still spoke of the future. Then, when the Japanese economic miracle came to a standstill and slammed down, they started talking about reality.

I also think it brought a life-sized hero. "The Ultra Series" also became a human drama when it became "The Return of Ultraman". It's a show that would work even if Ultraman didn't appear in it. There was a bit of such a story in "Seven" as well. The screenwriter, Tetsuo Kaneshiro, had a kind of longing for the future. There was a part of him that had doubts but wanted to believe in it. Kaneshiro was just trying to believe in it, but he didn't really believe in it. He knew the despair, but he had the strength to not talk about it, which was amazing.

Ueno: In a sense, Kaneshiro grew up in the land (Okinawa, the battlefield) where he had to know the reality of the generation that spent their youth during the WW2 and came to Tokyo. He's in an unusual position, isn't he?

Anno: Such a person can portray a character "Moroboshi Dan," who is considered a heretic on earth. Only such a person with that kind of original experience could draw him. You can't get that kind of feeling by just reading a book.

Ueno: In fact, the scriptwriter of "Iron King" (Sasaki Mamoru), who was surrounded by activists, knew it would go in vain, but he felt some sympathy and wrote about the Independent Phantom Power Party and the Shiranui tribe. Whether in a good way or a bad way, an experience has an impact after all.

Anno: The goal is to overthrow the current government. The atmosphere of extremism, etc., is still present in the work. He has no choice but to treat it as an evil. Well, considering all this, the works of that time were good quality. I think the people who made them were very serious about it.

Ueno: Is it different now?

Anno: Yes, it's completely different now. Children's programs are often downplayed. It should be done properly precisely because it's a children's program. But it's on a different level or perhaps I should say it's a wrong stance.

Ueno: There are so many levels. There is a huge difference beyond comparison.

Anno: Indeed, but in the old days, the good ones were by far the best. There were a lot of good films. In the special effects industry, they started making a lot of poorly made films, and after the boom, a lot of bad ones came out at once.

Ueno: For me, it was good until "Taiyo Sentai Sun Vulcan".

Anno: I stopped watching it in the middle of Choudenshi Bioman, and then I came back to it around the time of Chōjin Sentai Jetman. The current Gekisou Sentai Carranger is extremely good, and the RV Robo combination scene was nice.

（2） Iron King: A giant hero film created by the staff of "The Silver Mask" after a blank period of about six months. The film has more social and political colors than its predecessor, with the protagonist as a member of the national power structure, and the opponents as ethnic minorities and revolutionary guerrillas who were once destroyed by the Japanese government. In this film, too, the producer's perspective is on the side of the enemy. Sasaki Mamoru, who wrote the screenplay for all 26 episodes, actually visited a Palestinian guerrilla hideout at the time, and his own experiences were probably reflected in the film.

（3） Silver Mask: A live-action, transforming hero film broadcast on TBS in 1971. One of Japan's foremost science fiction dramas, depicting a battle between the five orphans of Dr. Kasuga, the inventor of a rocket that runs on "photon energy," and aliens who attack to steal the secret. In this film, the composition of the invader and the invaded is reversed from that of the conventional heroic story, and the question "Isn't it the earthlings who are really bad?" Although it produced many thought-provoking and profound episodes, it was defeated in the ratings by the backstage program Miller Man (produced by Tsuburaya Productions).

（4） Warrior of Love Rainbowman: Broadcast on NET (now TV Asahi) in 1972, the film depicts the battle between Rainbow Man, a hero who can transform into seven different forms, and the international secret society "Die Die Die Gang", which aims at the annihilation of the Japanese people. The original author, Kawauchi Yasunori, was a political activist who was keen on post-war processing, so the theme of "Japan's war responsibility" was included in the film. This is evident in Die Die Gang's setting, in which "foreigners whose families were killed by Japanese soldiers organized to take revenge on the Japanese after the war.

（5） Tetsuo Kaneshiro: Main writer for "Ultra Q", "Ultraman", and "Ultra Seven" (1966-1968). Although he was born in Okinawa, he spent his impressionable youth as a native of mainland Japan, and was always conscious of projecting his own identity as a "foreigner" who was neither Okinawan nor Japanese onto the characters in his works. The most notable example of this is Moroboshi Dunn, the protagonist of Ultra Seven, who was always portrayed as a character in agony, standing between aliens and earthlings.' He passed away at a young age in 1975 in an accident.

Characters are Anno himself

-Part of the appeal of "Eva" is its characters with strong personalities. They seem to resemble someone around them, but in fact, they are nowhere to be found. You want to know more about them, and that's one of the things that attracts you to "Eva". It is often said that a part of director Anno is projected onto each character.

Anno: I feel especially close to Shinji, Misato and Asuka. And Kaworu as the shadow. Rei is made from the deepest part of me, the core of my being. I try to avoid interfering in myself as much as possible, and only give shape to what oozes out.

Ueno: I'm a big fan of Rei. For example, I really want Four Murasame from "Z Gundam" to exist. I really want to meet him in person. But that's not the case with Rei. It's not a 2D Complex thing, even if it's the same artificially created one, Rei is a complete being that doesn't exist in front of you.

Anno: Well, it's crazy (laughs). It was difficult, but I wanted Rei to be like that. Only a crazy person can draw it. So I had to go crazy.

Ueno: People talk about psychoanalysis and personality seminars, but have you always had a strong interest in psychology in general?

Anno: I wasn't interested in it at all.

Ueno: Did the process of working on Eva lead you in that direction?

Anno: Right, without being aware of it. I didn't read any books on psychoanalysis before. I only learned a little bit as a general education at university. It was the most interesting subject though.

Ueno: So there must have been some kind of important word or interest that stuck in your mind.

Anno: I guess I wasn't really interested in people. But when I started to tell my story, I needed words to convey it in the middle of the process. I concluded that the term psychological terms in common use are the easiest to use. I started reading a lot of books. I never thought I'd be interested in psychology until then.

-Rei, who was inside EVA-01's entry plug, overlaped Shinji's information from EVA-01 with her own memories and asked herself the question. The series of honest words spoken there is the very image of Rei, transparent and non-fragile.

Conversations between you and you

Anno: Episode 16 was the first time I went straight into my inner world. I've always wanted to do line drawings of words. The dialogue for that scene was still relatively easy. I just had to make the dialogues about myself. But then I got stuck with the Rei's monologue in the compilation. Oh, we started production on 16 episodes first. We could have made the compilation later.

When I was struggling with a clear picture, a friend lent me a book called "Bessatsu Takarajima (*7)", was about mental illness. It was the poems in the book that shocked me. It was a direct hit to my brain. Although Rei's monologue isn't the same as the poems in the book. Rei's monologue came to me like a dam, and I guess that was the turning point. Thanks to my friend I was able to take a step forward. I'm very grateful to him. You can't make a film by yourself. I realized that you have to work together with the staff and cast to make it interesting. It's impossible you do it alone.

-Shinji, who has been captured inside the angel's interior (imaginary space) called the Sea of Dirac, interacts with himself in emptiness. The sunset in the background and the fisheye lensed close-up of his face are just like "Ultraman".

-Each of the characters, including Shinji, expose their own minds, and their psychological complements are like watching a psycho-therapy session. Although director Anno was not aware of it, this kind of psychotherapy is actually available.

- 7) A series of mooks published by Takarajima sha. From political issues to subcultures, it has been established as a "new book for the young" and "knowledge magazine".

To non-Otaku, the final episode was standard ending?

-The final two episodes of the film have caused controversy not only among anime geeks, but also in many other places. The two episodes are said to have a major meaning that is unknown to the director Anno's intentions, although it is not surprising. What is it? And in the film version, which is waiting to be completed, will it be the final episode that everyone (including Anno) will be satisfied with?

Ueno: I think that (the last two episodes) is not a betrayal, but a kind of standard ending. In fact, that ending is easy to understand for people who watch experimental films, people who appreciate art and people who don't usually watch anime. But people who have been watching anime for a long time may feel betrayed when the ending is like that.

Anno: Lately I've been talking to more and more people who don't normally watch anime, and they've said they enjoyed it calmly. For example, it seems ladies liked episode 25. But I know most anime fans get upset when I say that. I understand why they're upset. I'm just sorry to hear people say that it's a lazy episode, I can't help but laugh. There are staff members who have overworked it, but none of them has been lazy. Again, those people might get pissed at me if I say these things, but I feel sad for those who can't feel it, even you've been watching from 1st episode. They don't understand unless I say it out loud. That's honestly painful, isn't it?

Actually, the TV version ends beautifully. Internally and externally, it's falling into place beautifully. Now I'm just working on another way to make it fit. Also, I haven't told anyone about the core, or the true feelings that made the last part of the TV version take that form. It doesn't mean that what I've been untruthful. Like other directors are the same, it's an important thing, so you don't usually tell people the main reason. Also, there is no such thing as a thing that satisfies everyone. Every person is different. There are as many wishes as there are people.

Will Eva have an answer?

Ueno: A lot of fans are expecting a film version to have some closure, but I don't expect to get any definitive answers in the first place, nor do I expect anything to unfold like we're expecting on the (online service) forums and so on. To be frank, is it possible that the film version will provide a tentative answer to the riddle surrounding Angel and EVA or the "Human Instrumentality Project"?

Anno: Sort of.

Ueno: It is only "sort of"?

Anno: Yeah. I don't have to give it all away. In fact, it's more boring to reveal everything. Eva is like a jigsaw puzzle, where the customer is presented with pieces of the puzzle. The assembling of the pieces is left to the audience. But there are no pictures of the finished product, so everyone imagines a different picture of the finished one. If there are parts that you can't find, I just tell you to fill in the missing parts by yourself. The process of assembling a jigsaw is fun, but the process of imagining the finished one is more fun. But for people who can't live without a manual, it must be hard.

-Anno has always said, "I want you to figure out the answers yourself, not just be given them". So even in the film version, it won't be an ending where everything is in place and all you have to do is watch. After that, each of us will have to complete the puzzle called "Eva" to find the answer.

Hideaki Anno: Protoculture Addicts #43 (NewType 11/1996)

- Quotes from Protoculture Addicts #43
- Translated by Miyako Graham
- Source: http://www.cjas.org/~echen/articles/spring97/05_03b.html

"Evangelion is my life and I have put everything I know into this work. This is my entire life. My life itself."

"Evangelion is like a puzzle, you know. Any person can see it and give his/her own answer. In other words, we're offering viewers to think by themselves, so that each person can imagine his/her own world. We will never offer the answers, even in the theatrical version. As for many Evangelion viewers, they may expect us to provide the 'all-about Eva' manuals, but there is no such thing. Don't expect to get answers by someone. Don't expect to be catered to all the time. We all have to find our own answers."

Note: this is the same as the interview above, which was translated in full years later. However, the PA excerpt is kept because of its sheer notoriety.

Yoshiyuki Sadamoto: Evangelion Manga, Vol 2, Commentary

- Translated by William Flanagan & David Ury
- Source: Neon Genesis Evangelion Manga Vol. 2 (Japanese) (Circa 1996)

Yoshiyuki Sadamoto: My Thoughts at the Moment (*Neon Genesis Evangelion vol. 2*: March 12, 1996)

-==Yoshiyuki Sadamoto: My Thoughts at the Moment (*Neon Genesis Evangelion vol. 2*: March 12, 1996)==

- Translation: William Flanagan
- Source: Neon Genesis Evangelion Manga volume 2 (March 12, 1996)

Over and above designing characters...

Q: You did the character designs for the animated version of Evangelion, and I'm sure that there were various points you paid special consideration to each character, so to start with, please talk about Shinji.

A: In a normal giant robot animated show the main character is noted for his enthusiastic battle spirit. And in Eva, the main character does pilot a giant robot, but Shinji is not noted for his enthusiasm, so I had to come up with a different heroic interprtation. Rather than a reflection of a hero, sort of a refraction of a hero.

Q: He's sort of a dry character.

A: He's a product of our era. I started out trying to create a character that would tap into the consciousness of today's anime fans.

Q: As a product of out era, you mean the attitude that, "My life is my own, and I'm not interested in the opinions of others," right?

A: He's a person who doesn't want to be interested in the opinions of others, but actually he's very interested. He's the kind of character who would encase himself in a shell of his own making.

Q: A sort of delicate character.

A: I wanted a sort of clean image that a woman tends to project. But also a character that is cold, unambitious-the type who would commit suicide, but can't bring himself to do it. It was my intention to create a wistful character who had given up on life.

Q: Did you have a model for his face.

A: Not particularly. The image of a hero in Japan is like Ushiwakamaru, the strong champion whom no adversity will affect. When you say "hero" in Japan, it conjures the impression of a man, just prior to middle age, accomplished at arms, with a burning spirit. Or maybe you think or a bishonen (beautiful young man). In the beginning I gave Shinji longer hair, so in the dramatic scenes, it could hide his face or wave in the breeze. But when I drew that, he looked a little too wild-and so delicate the slightest pressure would break him. So finally I tried for a look where you could see the forhead through the bangs, shorter hair-the look of a boyish young girl. Spreaking in concreate terms, his eyes are a girl's eyes. I drew them exactly as I drew Nadia's [the heroine of Gainax's 1990 TV series Nadia, forthcoming in English from A.D.V. Films-ed.] eyes. He's a male Nadia, just as if I had given Nadia a masculine makeover. Lengthen the eyelashes and change the hair style, and you have Nadia.

Q: You don't draw characters out of any love of simplicity.

A: That's right. Our aim was to be the antithesis of all the giant robot animated shows around us. It's not a world where the wind blows through your hair while you declare your purpose in a booming voice. Especially in the past one or two years, this type of refractive, feminine character has not been seen. I wanted to tell the tale of a main character taken from my own life, so I designed a character straight from the more stoic part of myself.

Q: So instead of someone pushing you to draw, you added pieces of yourself to draw the characters.

A: I think that the theme of the animated version is that the main character's attitude changes little by little. I think that in the anime, Anno wrote the script in his own words, and that is why the change occurs. And the reason for the subtle changes between the animation and the manga is that Yoshiyuki Sadamoto is writing the script using Anno's characters. I think the anime is...I can't say cuter. But it has the feel of an honors student. The manga is a little more twisted...the feeling of a flunk-out. I think the reason behind this is that Anno was his class president in elementary and junior high schools, and flunking out was something he couldn't do, whereas I never had that problem. (laughs)

Q: You're saying that twisted sensibilities are a subtle difference?

A: According to Anno's thought process, a twisted person is one who puts on a cool face, but once you see his inside, you get to the crazy portion, just like all the young people today. My approach is the opposite. On the inside the characters are stoic and earnest, but the outside is twisted, just like a child. So I could never write the anime scripts in my own voice. My Shinji is quite a bit different than that. In the end it is his resistance, his refusal to listen to what Misato has to say, but he still makes the right decision. I think that approach is where our methods differ the most.

Q: What about Rei?

A: I played around with a character, Ukina, in a story I wrote a long time ago in NEWTYPE called Koto ("The Ogre on the Desert Isle"). You take her, give her shaggy, bobbed, wolf-like hair, and you've got Rei. Really, I just played with her a bit-the way the eyes are drawn, the basic character is the same. Her character was locked in as translucent, like a shadow or the air. The kind of girl you can't touch. The girl you long for, but there is nothing about her that you can grab a hold onto.

Q: The same type of stance that Kensuke and Toji feel about Rei?

A: Even more distant. The first time you see Rei, she is all bandaged up. The group Kinniku Shojo Tai has a song called "Hotai de Masshiro na Shojo" ("The Girl White with Bandages"). When I heard that song, an image popped into my mind, and I drew Rei according to that. I thought, "I'd like to draw a girl like that." This girl who is fated to pilot a robot. I wanted to draw her even before I heard of Shinji. There were two things that went into the decision to make her eyes red: one is the fact that she didn't have enough outstanding features, and the second is from a buisness standpoint, the makers of the game wanted her differentiated from the other characters, but personnally I think it turned out to have a great effect. She's so quiet you can only tell her character from her gaze and her facial expressions, so she leaves the impression of having a strong stare.

Eva in the Manga and the Anime

Q: Concentrating on the story, where do you think the biggest difference is between the manga and the anime?

A: Well I did write the script of the manga using the anime as a base. And at the moment, I think they're pretty much the same. I've made the story more compact. I think even if you rephrase a sentence into less words, you're still saying the same thing. But the manga does have a different approach. Maybe I should say it has a differnt coreography. The main point is that the anime has quite a few different people writing the continuity, for example when the assistant director, Mr. Tsurumaki wrote the continuity for a particular script, and when Masayuki wrote a continuity for the same script, it came out to be a completely different program. I think there's a difference there.

Q: There are the differences of format. You can't draw a manga in the same way you would animate a show.

A: And that's the reason I tend to change the script entirely. I pick and choose what is easiesr to say in manga, The anime became a craze among the fans, and I wanted to lower the demographic to people about 14 or 15 years old, but the content was so difficult, it just wouldn't dumb down. If I tried, it would cease to be Evangelion. If that were to happen, there would be no reason left to do the book, so I went from the planning stage and came up with the book you're reading now. You see, what I wanted to do was exactly the same storyline that was contained in the TV series. But I thought it might make the comic easier to understand if you weren't bombarded with quite the quantity of information, and if you shined the spotlight directly opn the main character's soul. I put my whole heart into seeing what kind of world the Eva world would be if seen through Shinji's heart. And then, what kind of world would you see if you shined a spotlight on the souls of the other characters. Also, manga is basically drawn by only one person, and it is impossible to fit the great load of content into the comic. The anime can end in half a year, but the manga, even after abbreviating, could take years to tell the same story. So the idea is to simplify the spotlight on different spots than the anime, or you make the flow of the main character's emotions easier to understand. If you make the comic exactly the same as the anime, you will never be able to make up for the loss created by the abbreviation, and even though you have the same story, you have a very different product. On the other hand, since manga doesn't have voice actors or music, it will be a very different product, anyway.

Q: Well, it certainly seems like a different viewpoint looking on the same story. We see Shinji's thoughts which we never saw in the anime. Were his thoughts the same in both versions?

A: Most likely his thoughts in the comic are just my own impressions. If you asked Mr. Anno, I'm sure they would be entirely different, but unless I get into Shinji's head, I can't draw the comic. One of my weak points is I have to empathize with the character before I draw. In the first episode of the anime, over and above the dramatic elements, Shinji's dialog was the most important part of the episode. That is what made me want to draw the comic. That is what made me purposely change his dialog. What I'm attempting to write is the piece of my life-the dialogue of Shinji's that comes from inside me.

Hideaki Anno: Declaration of Complete sealing (Playboy 08/1996)

- Translation: Riki
- Source: https://web.archive.org/web/20130116055550/http://johakyu.net/lib/2008/02/2008-02-03-000766.php

It has been a year and a half since the TV version ended its run, leaving behind many mysteries and a strong impact. In the midst of a boom that has even been called a social phenomenon, the complete conclusion, "THE END OF EVANGELION," has finally been released in theaters and has become a huge hit. But now that Anno has brought "Eva" to a complete conclusion, all he can think about is his next film!

"Evangelion was a scream on a special frequency."

I was excited when I saw the complete version of the movie at a preview screening. EVANGELION is ending beautifully, isn't it? When I returned to the editorial department, one of my seniors asked me, "So, has the mystery been solved?" But I don't care about that.

They explained what the "Human Instrumentality Project" was, but I was happy to see that my energy level had been increasing since the second half of the TV version, and that it had reached the end as if it was about to erupt. I want to meet the director who finished such an epic battle!

July 11, extremely hot. I went to the Nikkatsu Studios in Chofu to directly interview Director Anno, who was preparing for his next film "Love & Pop".

--Right now, I think you're right on the border between "Eva" and "Love & Pop," but what's taking up most of your time in your mind?

Anno: The next one. That's it.

--This "Love & Pop" is a live-action film, isn't it?

Anno: At the moment, I feel that I've done everything I can do in animation. I guess I should be more generous, but I'm not a person who thinks too much about the future.

-- "Princess Mononoke", another popular animated film this summer, I feel Miyazaki's firm message. On the other hand, "Eva" doesn't have a clear message, but it has an unusual realism and power, doesn't it?

Anno: Because "Eva" is like a scream. And it's a scream with a special frequency that normal people can't hear. But since there were so many people who turned their heads to such a scream, I thought Japan might be a little strange (laughs).

--When I look at "Eva", I just wonder why Anno-san has so much energy.

Anno: I don't have any physical energy. I'm not strong. (Coughing. Mr. Anno had a cold). I've been physically weak since I was a child.

--But it takes a lot of energy to keep screaming, doesn't it? Where does that energy come from?

Anno: Rather than where it comes from, it's just that I'm concentrating the energy that other people are dispersing into the work of making art. It's all I have. In fact, I don't really have a life.

I sleep in my office, and I'm not interested in food or anything. Ever since I was a kid, space food was my ideal diet (laughs). Since I'm not interested in such things, I just put all my energy into my work. That's why I think it's great to see people who are properly married, have children, and are able to maintain their families while making art.

--Mr. Ryu Murakami, author of "Love & Pop," says, "I can't communicate normally," and "Talent is not excess, but lack, and we try to fill the deficiency by using all our abilities."

Talent is not an excess but a deficiency, and we try to fill the deficiency by using all our abilities.

Anno: Oh, that's exactly what I think, too. I also think that talent is a lack. I'm trying to fill in what I'm missing by expressing myself in some way. If I don't do that, I don't feel like I'm living.

--But as a result, "Eva" became such a huge hit that it was considered a social phenomenon.

Anno: I thought I'd be happier if it became a hit, but when I actually saw it, I wasn't so happy. What I felt this time was that I would rather have been recognized by a single woman than by 100 million people. It's not that I wanted anyone in particular.

--But the fact that you kept screaming until this point, you must have had something you wanted to say, right?

Anno: I'm not going to say that here. I won't tell anyone (laughs). That's all in the film.

Is there no such thing as an original anymore?

It has been pointed out that "Evangelion" draws heavily from previous anime works, such as Devilman, Mobile Suit Gundam, Space Runaway Ideon, and so on. This is what makes "Evangelion" a well-made robot animation.

Anno: First of all, we have to admit that our generation is basically not original. The only common language of our generation was really the programs that came out of the TV box. hen you live under the seven stations of commercial broadcasting and NHK, everything becomes more uniform. The Tunnels (*1) were the first heroes of our generation, and what they did was recreate the TV shows we used to watch ourselves. But that's all they could do. And we have to start from there, too.

- 1) The Tunnels (とんねるず, Tonneruzu) are an owarai duo with a long history composed of Tokyo-born Takaaki Ishibashi (石橋 貴明, Ishibashi Takaaki) and Noritake Kinashi (木梨 憲武, Kinashi Noritake). (Wikipedia)

--But "Eva" started to seek something original in the middle, didn't it?

Anno: That's true. My previous works had been other people's projects, but this was the first one that I had created from scratch. In that situation, when I looked for something original, I had no choice but to look at my own life. The answers I got from my own experiences, my own thoughts, and my own ideas are definitely original.

--In the past, were there any original works?

Anno: No. It is said that in the long run, most of the patterns of drama can be found in the Bible (laughs). So I think that storylines have always been just combinations. In the world of music, paintings, and movies, it has been said that patterns have been exhausted for a long time. However, especially in the case of "Evangelion", as I mentioned earlier, we grew up in almost the same environment, so it was easy to find the same TV, manga, and music that we passed through. That's why there were so many people who were happy to find it.

--What do you think of that kind of joy? There are a huge number of books on Eva mysteries in the bookstores now.

Anno: I'm not interested.

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In the second half of the TV version of "Eva," everyone begins to struggle as if they were Anno's alter ego, and in the final two episodes, the main character Shinji ends up asking himself, "What am I?" This last episode had a great impact, but also left many unanswered questions, which frustrated the fans. This film version, the final version, was produced to "settle" the last two episodes of the TV version. Anno's way of exposing himself is sometimes compared to "masturbation".

Anno: It's the easiest thing to do, because people think that anyone can do it if they put their mind to it, and the older generation says that it's shameful and foolish. But with "Eva," I was forced to do just that.

--But for being called masturbation, Anno's works seem to be very serviceable.

Anno: It's a service to myself. It has to be interesting for me to look at it first. So, even though masturbation is masturbation, I'm confident that my work is more artistic than others. However, "Eva" is an anime. As long as it's an anime, it seems like I'm masturbating with my pants off, but in fact I'm just drawing naked drawings on top of my pants. That's the nature of animation, where everything is made up, but in that sense it's a reality within fiction.

"What is the real in the fake?"

Love & Pop" is a story about a high school girl who goes on a date with a sugar daddy in Shibuya. To put it bluntly, it is a surprising choice for a director after "Evangelion".

--What was the theme you pursued in "Love & Pop" after forgetting "Evangelion"?

Anno: It's the question of "What is real in a make-believe world?" I think the value of making something that isn't a documentary lies in this one point: to feel a sense of reality and truth within the fiction. Anime is all fiction, and no one believes that there is anything real in it. So it's more of an illusion than a fiction. What is left in there that is real enough to compete with the documentaries? - That feeling became stronger while I was working on "Evangelion".

--In the latter half of "Eva," the story and characters start to become confused, but the background of the unusually high level of realism is due to this change in your feelings.

Anno: That's right. At that time, there was a link between the desire for realism and the desire for originality.

--But what does "realism" mean? It's a word that everyone uses, but I'm not quite sure what it means.

Anno: For example, I think the realistic part of a movie is the part that you can take into yourself and replace it with your own body. It's a question of how to incorporate it into what you're making.

-- Recently, a spaceship went to Mars and sent back images, but even though that was real, it didn't feel real to me.

Anno: That was good. The explorer car that went to Mars was very small. I thought it was going to be a big one like the moon car, but it was actually a radio controlled toy that was very active. That was very realistic.

--So, Anno, what parts of "Eva" did you think were the most realistic?

Anno: Hmmm... (Groans all the way)

--Is it really that hard to answer?

Anno: No, I mean, I forgot (laughs).

--You really forgot about "Eva", didn't you?

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After all, "THE END OF EVANGELION", the complete version of Neon Genesis Evangelion, drew 400,000 people in its three days of release. It was a bigger hit than "DAETH & RIBIRTH" in the spring. Every media outlet is trying to capitalize on this success with various projects.

However, Hideaki Anno is quickly running off in search of the next "reality". What kind of new "realism" is in the future? For the time being, we can't take our eyes off this man!

Hideaki Anno: Valuable conversation between director Hideaki Anno and Kihachi Okamoto (Animage 01/1997)

- Translated by Riki
- Source: https://type-r.hatenablog.com/entry/20151029

Yesterday, NHK's "Close-Up Today" aired a special program on film director Kihachi Okamoto.

The program, titled "Series: 70 Years After World War II: Message from Director Kihachi Okamoto," focused on the works of director Kihachi Okamoto, who is known for various war films such as Nikudan and Dokuritsu Gurentai, and examined why they are attracting the attention of today's youth.

It tries to understand the message that can be understood today through war films.

Watching this program reminded me of a program that was aired on the Japan Movie Channel on February 7, 2013, called "A Talk with Kihachi Okamoto and Hideaki Anno".

Anno Hideaki, the director of Neon Genesis Evangelion, has been a big fan of Okamoto's work for a long time, and has been so devoted to him that he has included many "Kihachi Okamoto homages" in his anime (GunBuster, etc.).

The influence of "Battle of Okinawa (film)" is particularly strong, with similarities in the way the message is displayed and the cuts and transition of the film can be seen everywhere.

In addition, the lines "There are too many U.S. ships and we can't see the ocean" and "It's 70% ships and 30% ocean!" to "There are too many enemies and the universe doesn't look black enough" or "There are 70% enemies and 30% black!". It is well known that the second half of GunBuster has become "almost 'Battle of Okinawa (film)'".

So today, I'm here to talk about the original project of this program, which was published in the January 1997 issue of "Monthly Animage".

Here are some excerpts (not the whole article) from the long article titled "Hideaki Anno and Kihachi Okamoto Talk about 'Photography (Film).

I think it is a very valuable conversation in the history of Japanese film, as only professional filmmakers can talk about the techniques and thoughts of filmmaking.

A conversation between Hideaki Anno and Kihachi Okamoto to celebrate the release of the film version.

"I'm here to talk about 'Pictures'." Hideaki Anno discussed photography (film) with Kihachi Okamoto, a director whose "personal view of life and film direction has honestly been a great influence on me" (from a special contribution to LD's "Furious Showa History: Battle of Okinawa (film)").

The discussion took place at director Okamoto's home in Ikuta, Kanagawa Prefecture.

There we found some of the secrets of filmmaking that only filmmakers can talk about.

About Screen

Okamoto: I watched the video.

Anno: I'm so embarrassed.

Okamoto: This morning, I watched it again, twice in the end. I didn't see it right the first time and the...

AM (Animage staff): "Evangelion"?

Okamoto: Yes, I watched that from the end.

AM: Then you watched from the last episode?

Okamoto: Yes. Because it (the reference material) said "controversial". I saw the last episode first, so I didn't really understand what it meant at first (laughs).

Anno: I'm sorry for the trouble.

Okamoto: It was fun to watch them in order.

Anno: Thank you very much! I've been nervous and sweating since a while ago.

Okamoto: "GunBuster" is much easier to understand. The second one (the last episode) is in black and white. I thought it was probably to make the last sentence "Welcome back" stand out.

Anno: My generation was in the midst of the transition from black and white to color. I was trying to make the people of today understand the value of color (laughs). That's black and white 35 mm film.

Okamoto: I like black-and-white, and I'd say almost half of my films are black-and-white.

Anno: Recently, black and white is being used more and more in TV commercials. Even for posters, it's kind of popular.

Okamoto: And then there's partial coloring.

Anno: Yes, part color. Everyone's eyes have become accustomed to beautiful full-color images, so I guess it's a rarity nowadays.

Okamoto: But nowadays, the cost of developing is very high. In the past, there was always a developer for black and white, but now, when an order for black and white comes in, they make a new developer.

Anno: For color, we can develop the film on the same day, though. When we were working on GunBuster, we were told to give one day for black and white, which was a bit of a challenge in terms of schedule. The rushes (*1) didn't come out until two days later.

- 1) An unedited positive film that is burned to show the results of shooting in a movie. A rush print.

Okamoto: But the color doesn't fade. The prints especially don't fade over time.

Anno: They turn red, don't they?

Okamoto: The whole thing turned pink, even though I wasn't shooting a pink film (*2) (laughs). But even negatives fade a little. From four or five years after "Nikudan", it was much cheaper to make color films.

- 2) An entertainment film that focuses on the subject of sexuality and includes many depictions of sexual acts.

Anno: I've only seen "Nikudan" twice.

Okamoto: Seeing it twice is enough (laughs).

Anno: I can't stand it, so I can't watch it. It's very painful to watch. Instead, even though I've only seen it twice, I remember each cut vividly. I think I even remember the connections between the cuts. It had such an impact on me.

On the other hand, I watched "Japan's Longest Day" and "Battle of Okinawa (film)" over and over again. For a while, I used them as background videos when I was storyboarding, and when I intended to use them as background videos, I ended up watching them, and ended up saying, "Oh, I just killed three hours" (laughs). "Battle of Okinawa (film)" is the movie I've watched the most times in my life. I've seen it more than 100 times in total.

AM: Why did you like it so much?

Anno: I think it's instinctive, not logical.

Okamoto: When I went to shoot "Battle of Okinawa (film)," the area south of Mabuni (the southernmost tip of Okinawa) was still scattered with human bones. There were monuments for the loyal souls of each prefecture were being built as if in competition with each other. I thought it would be better to spend money on collecting and mourning the bones than to build such a thing. I didn't like the area south of there, because I felt that there would be dead bodies buried where I was walking.

I feel jealous because you can have as many people as you want in your films (laughs). With live-action films, you have to pay a lot of money per person. Nowadays, extras cost 6,800 yen a day, but back then it was dollars (*3). We went to Okinawa with 19 people because we didn't have any money. Then there were more than 20 people of the press there. "Why are there so many more people in the press?" I was pissed off (laughs). In the end, there weren't enough actors, so I played the role of the watchman who said, "I can't see the ocean!".

- 3) Between '58-'72, the currency in Okinawa was US dollars.

AM: So you are in the movie?

Okamoto: Yes, we were short of actors at the time.

AM: That's why you said, "If it's animation, people can be just drawn.".

Okamoto: But I'm sure you have your own difficulties.

Anno: Yes, there are. I also feel jealous of the live-action filmmaking. If I worked in animation, I would be longing for live-action, and if I worked in live-action, I would be longing for animation. So it's just a matter of asking for what you don't have.

You can't move the camera in animation. Recently, CGI has made things a lot easier, but there is still a certain "CGI-ness" in it.

Okamoto: I see a lot of hard work. For example, without moving the camera, how about using a shadow or something to make it look like the person has moved in some way?

Anno: The main camera work is fix (*4) in animation. The rest of the way, the camera can only be moved by two-dimensional panning (*5), TU (track-up) (*6) and etc. Moving the background or moving the camera around is inefficient in animation.

- 4) The technique of shooting without ever moving the camera while it is fixed.
- 5) A shooting technique in which the camera is shaken from left to right or right to left in a series of shots.
- 6) A technique for shooting a subject while the camera moves forward.

Okamoto: I like the tempo, too.

Anno: The tempo is a direct result of your influence. I think your tempo is exactly what makes it great for animation. The charm is in the cuts and transition. I think there is a great sense of pleasure in your photographs (films), not in the content of the cut, but in the moment when the cut changes.

In other words, there is a sense of pleasure in the moment when the amount of information on the fixed camera changes. For example, the silhouette changes when the person on the right side of the screen is switched to the left in the next cut.

I think that's the only thing you can do, especially with such a Standard size (*7) frame with no special features. It's also great the way you use over-the-shoulder shot (a large subject in the foreground of the image). Especially in CinemaScope size (*8), it's great to have that effect. It's a shame that CinemaScope is not available now. Even with VistaVision size (*9), I think the frame size is too halfway. I don't like Standard size, but I also don't like VistaVision size because it's halfway. I insist the CinemaScope size is best for photography (movies).

- 7) Screen aspect ratio, 1.33:1 or 1.375:1
- 8) Screen aspect ratio, 2.35:1
- 9) American Vista (most commonly used in movies all over the world, including Japan), screen aspect ratio, 1.85:1

Okamoto: It's interesting how you fill in the gaps between the halfway (CinemaScope) sizes screen. For example, up to VistaVision size, a full shot (*10) looks good, and a cowboy shot (*11) also looks good. But when it comes to the CinemaScope size, whether you take a full shot or a cowboy shot, you need to add some objects on both sides to make a beautiful picture. But I can use that to enjoy making pictures.

- 10) A shot framed to fill the screen with a person's entire body.
- 11) A shot framed to include a region from the actor's head to mid-thigh.

Anno: Also, with CinemaScope size, the audience moves their heads from right to left in the theater. That's impossible with TV. That's why I think there's no meaning to the value of movies, or pictures, other than CinemaScope size.

About the tempo of the cuts and transition

Anno: Is that kind of cut and transition tempo instinctive rather than logical? Do you cut intuitively, or do you already decide on the transition points when you're shooting?

Okamoto: Well, it's decided when we are shooting. The minimum is 2 frames, but one blink needs at least 8 frames. That's why I think we need to keep the 8 frames in mind.

Anno: I've heard that 8 or 7 frames are important. 6 frames to leave without letting the viewers confirm. At least 9 frames to make sure the them understand something.

Okamoto: I use a tempo of 4 frames. It's not 8 beats, but I believe "8 frames" is the key. For example, if an actor with large eyes blinks, I should use 12 frames.

Anno: 4 frames and 7 frames.

With drawings, even 2 frames can leave a lasting impression on the viewer.

Okamoto: Was it said 2 frames bring a subliminal effect?

Anno: I don't think that's true.

In anime, the amount of information is limited because it's a drawing after all. So if the drawing is familiar to the viewer, even 2 frames are enough to leave an impression.

For a picture with movement, about 7 frames are enough. If it's a still picture, even 3 frames could to be too much for me. In the case of a still picture with a lot of cell area, it's hard to tell if it's a single frame, but 2 frames are enough.

Okamoto: For running, I use 8 frames, or 8 steps. For walking, I feel that 4 steps are usually enough, so I decide to use 4 steps. Also, for example, by changing the number a bit, or using odd numbers, you can create a "slightly panicky" atmosphere there.

Anno: When it comes to battle scenes, I use 7 frames.

Okamoto: I think it's better to use a halfway number in a battle scene.

Anno: I use 7 frames with the insert. In reality, I shoot the film at about 12 frames, and then drop 3 or 5 - 6 frames on the process of blocking of the scene.

In the case of animation, except for AC (action cuts), I mostly decide based on the picture, where to cut. The only thing I use as a basis for transition is the tempo and rhythm of the line.

It takes me about 12 hours to cut 20 minutes off from a film. The longest one is about 24 hours, and it was done over two days.

Okamoto: In my case, I only have about four days for editing. Last year, I was given the same four days to edit "East Meets West," but the overall tempo wasn't really mine.

I found out afterwards that I had had a stroke, and I've been a little strange since around February last year. If I had known that I was sick, I would have asked for one or two more days to fully examine and rework the piece, and I think I would have been able to achieve my current tempo. That's why I had to re-edit it this spring, because I couldn't stop thinking about it.

AM: You care about it that much, I understand.

Okamoto: I couldn't find my tempo last year, so much so that I had to re-edit. It couldn't be true. That's why the re-edited version was jammed at 1 hour, 44 minutes and 40 seconds. The first one I did was 2 hours and 3 minutes, but it was shortened to 1 hour, 44 minutes and 40 seconds.

Once I shortened it that much, it looked so much better. I realized that this was my tempo. I think the next time TV Asahi broadcasts it, a shorter version will be released.

Anno: Well, I'm looking forward to that one. To be honest, I thought you might be aging (laughs).

Okamoto: As well as my age, when I go to America, I tend to take it easy. I guess it's partly because of my age, but I don't think age has much to do with the tempo.

Anno: It's all about rhythm, yes.

Okamoto: I have a bit of a temperamental personality. For example, when I'm shooting a scene, sometimes a three or four minute scene in one cut, I'll cut off the beginning part and the last part based on the limit of my frustration.

Anno: I always cut off the last part of the cut, too. It's called "three closed frames(*12)". So I always cut at the end of the line. It's a very tight cut.

- 12)

Okamoto: But if you cut it off at the end of the line, it doesn't have a good tempo. If you leave just one or two frames after the lines are finished, it becomes much better.

For example, if you say " Oda Nobunaga" and then cut it off at the "ga," it would become "Oda Nobuna".

Anno: I see, you shouldn't cut right at the end of the line. You have to leave a few frames after the lines.

Okamoto: Leave just one or two frames.

Anno: Do you cut at the moment the actor's mouth closes after the line?

Okamoto: Rather, I cut based on the sound. After the "ga" in "Nobunaga," I leave just one or two frames before cutting. I think it works.

Anno: It's really nice to see a scene change at the same moment as the end of a line. I think it was Okamoto's photography (film) that taught me that kind of tempo, and it became ingrained in my body. But mine is just an imitation after all, and I'm embarrassed to be seen by you.

Okamoto: I think you're right. You can't get that kind of sense unless you've been messing around with it for a long time.

Fundamentally, if you don't enjoy yourself, the audience won't either.

Anno: Yes, I agree.

About the characters' reactions

Okamoto: So just do what feels good to you. Where the play needs a reaction, you just show the one the audience wants to see, you know. If there is an attacker in a scene, the audience will want to know what the defender looks like. That's why I include reactions.

Anno: There's always a reaction, isn't there?

Okamoto: So, in the case of 40 to 50 cuts, I split the shots in half (attack and defense reactions). Young people nowadays say that's difficult, but I think it's the easiest way if you learn it.

Anno: "Blue Christmas" is also good, because it always has reactions. I liked the fact that there was no off-line dialogue (*13). Instead of a long take with a fixed camera, you always used a reverse angle (*14) with the camera on (*15). That's really cool.

No matter how small the reaction is, you always include the receiving line. Tatsuya Nakadai's "Ooh" (with hand gestures) was also included, and I liked the detail and completeness of it.

Whenever there is something happening, there is always a "yes" response, right? I really like how the scene changes after the "yes" is said. Whenever I draw a storyboard, I always include that. I'm told by the staff that it' a bit too much.

- 13) A line of dialogue spoken when the character's mouth is not visible, such as off-screen or when the character's face is not visible.
- 14) a cutback.
- 15) A character is on screen.

Okamoto: But I've been looking at your work, and I feel a closeness to you (laughs).

Anno: Thank you very much!

Okamoto: I felt that.

Anno: If someone asked me who my most favorite film director was, I would have said "Kihachi Okamoto" before even thinking about it.

Okamoto: I'm so grateful (laughs).

I sometimes watch movies without any reaction, but when they go on and on without any reaction, I start thinking about how I want to see what the defenders look like, and it makes my head hurt.

Anno: Recently, I've been trying to make the audience think about it. I think I've been a little too kind in showing things. I need to think of a way to intentionally avoid showing it.

Okamoto: That's the only way to do it when you're doing long takes.

Anno: I'm getting bored with that, and I'm wondering if there's anything new.

Okamoto: What's new these days is "jumping" (*16) in the scene.

Anno: It's a "no-arrangement(*16)" approach. I think there's a feeling of comfort that comes from that. But it's almost like manipulating information, isn't it? You decide what you want to show the audience, and that's enough.

- 16) A method of connecting scenes and cuts in such a way that the scenes and cuts "jump" by omitting unnecessary setups (actions, descriptions, explanations) when developing the story.

Okamoto: The customer is more advanced than the filmmaker. So, I think it's quite possible to do that.

Anno: Thanks to TV, people are used to watching images, so I think they can keep up with that. So I'm sure new methods will emerge, but I'm going back to the French New Wave (*17). Maybe I've come full circle and am back to where I started.

- 17) The movement was characterized by its rejection of traditional filmmaking conventions in favor of experimentation and a spirit of The movement was characterized by its rejection of traditional filmmaking conventions in favor of experimentation and a spirit of iconoclasm.

Animation and Live Action

Okamoto: Animation and live-action are both the same thing, but I think it's absolutely possible to say that live-action is not the best, but that animation has a significant advantage in this area.

Anno: Among animation directors, there's a lot of longing, or rather complaining, about live-action. They just replace the live-action images with celluloid pictures and slide them in. I think they just want to make animation look more like live-action.

Okamoto: I don't think you should think about it that way.

Anno: That's right. It's painful to watch.

Okamoto: And we both have our limits.

AM: Anno-san, you were saying that it would be good if everyone in the animation industry learned the rhythm of Okamoto-san's transitions.

Anno: Animation is also a "world of pauses". I think it's most efficient to seek pleasure in the moment when the world changes from the world of pauses to the world of pauses. The moment when the cut changes, that kind of thing.

AM: You felt that kind of comfort when you watched Okamoto's films.

Anno: Yes. In TV, there is a limit of 3,500 pictures in 30 minutes. So you can't move the characters around as much as you'd like. So where do you look for the best visual efficiency when you can't move the characters, I think it's the moment when the cut changes.

AM: In that respect, Okamoto-san's films are very pleasing.

Anno: It feels really good. It's one of the ultimate pleasures of film.

In commemoration of the release of the film version, a conversation between Hideaki Anno and Kihachi Okamoto: "I'm here to talk about 'photography (film)'. (From the January 1997 issue of Animage Monthly)

Hideaki Anno talks about NOW & THEN (Newtype 09/1997)

- Translated by Riki
- Source: https://web.archive.org/web/20080725134322/http://johakyu.net/lib/2007/07/2007-07-27-000542.php

An interview with Anno Hideaki right after the release of THE END OF EVANGELION.

At that time, he would have never thought that he would be rebuilding Eva himself ten years later, never knew that he would be married.

--Now that "Evangelion" has finally reached its conclusion with this film, what are your honest feelings about it?

Anno: I just thought, "It's over". And now I can move on.

But I don't think this feeling of being finished should be experienced twice with the same title. The staff who have been with us for so long and I have already started other works, so "Eva" is already over for us. My own feeling is all about the message I put at the beginning of episode 26. There is no fiction in that shot. It's real, and it's true.

Right now, my mind is occupied with the next live-action film, so I've already forgotten about "Eva". The erase head is spinning one after another, initializing and rewriting.

--I think the theme of "Eva" was communication between people, especially in the second half. How did you feel when you sent the message through video?

Anno: Not only in this film, but I think that expression is made up of a collection of misunderstandings. This is especially true for video, which is a complex and one-sided medium. That's why we have to translate things to make them easier for others to understand, but there are parts of "Eva" where we dared to discard this process. But there are parts of "Eva" where I purposely discarded the translation process because it would have resulted in something different. This is partly because I don't have the skills to do so, but it's also because I was under such pressure. That's why "Eva" is more like a scream than a word. I don't really think of it as a message.

--You have been saying in various media since the end of the TV series that "anime fans should return to reality".

Anno: It's better to be a little dramatic about such things.

I received a lot of criticism from various sides, saying that it was unnecessary for people who use anime as an emergency refuge from reality, and from the industry's point of view, that I should not say anything that would reduce the number of customers. I was prepared for that, but I thought it would be a bad idea if someone didn't mention the pitfalls of anime fans and online services from a different angle at that time.

It's true that both anime fans and this industry are essentially constitutionally not looking for change. That's why my actions and "Eva" itself are just the product of unfulfilled feelings. But I think it's better to look at things from as many angles as possible, to verify and recognize them. That's why I wanted people to at least know that if you look at anime fans from outside their shells, this is what they look like.

--Compared to your previous works, "Eva" has become a work that strongly reflects your own thoughts.

Anno: From the point of view of those who think it is good to portray others by forcing themselves to do so, I think my act is nothing but foolishness. However, after 10, 20, 30 years of living in a vague sense of isolation, we had no choice but to scream for ourselves. I think we are a lonely generation that can only recognize our own existence by having others recognize our individual existence.

--Do you feel that "Eva" brought you out of your shell?

Anno: I guess I haven't gotten out. However, I do have an image of the inside of my shell getting bigger. Maybe that's what breaking out of the shell is all about.

--Why do you think the ending of this film was chosen the way it was?

Anno: I don't think the intention of the film should be put into words, and if it were that simple, I wouldn't have bothered to make a video.

What He Aims to Achieve with Live Action "Love & Pop"

--Your first live-action film "Love & Pop (*1)" will be released in January next year. Did Mr. Murakami mention anything to you about making it into a movie?

(*1 A novel written by Ryu Murakami, about sugar daddy dating from the perspective of a high school girl.)

Anno: No, this is from us. When I first read about it, I thought I'd like to try it.

--Why did you choose "Love & Pop" as your next film?

Anno: Because it is practically possible to produce. Love & Pop" could be done without spending a lot of money, and since the characters are limited, it would be possible to schedule it during summer vacation.

Also, there are many things I wanted to try in the film, such as the possibility of a different approach from the novel, and the challenge of paralleling information.

--Do you have any thoughts on the subject, sugar daddy dating?

Anno: No, not really. The story just happened to be that kind of story, and I wasn't interested in sugar daddy dating, and I don't know anything about it yet. I'm just starting to do on-the-spot interviews, and I don't know anything about trends in the world. I doubt if I can film a high school girl in this situation (laughs).

But on the other hand, I hope I can be neutral without knowing anything about anything. I think it would be a failure if I were to misunderstand and assume that this is what high school girls are like these days.

--Do you have an image of how you would like to create it visually?

Anno: I have to quickly change my mind and think. The only problem is that I don't really like Shibuya. So I guess I'll have to start by asking why that is, and use the parts that stick out as a starting point to move forward. We don't have a lot of time before we have to start shooting (in August).

--Is the production process for live action different from that of animation?

Anno: Yes, it's different. In live-action photography, you have to make a quick decision, and it's a physical challenge. You can't shoot something that doesn't exist in front of the camera lens. Rather than a system for making pictures, the flow is very different. The stance of a director is also different. This is a good experience for me.

A sense of urgency to keep shooting

--Is there anything you'd like to do away from film now?

Anno: No, I don't have any. I guess I'm not interested in my own life. I'm not interested in eating, cleaning, or washing. What I wear is disposable. I buy shirts and pants at a nearby convenience store, wear them once, and then throw them away. I guess I don't have a sense of life (laughs).

--It's an amazing energy to make a new movie right after the long term work of "Eva", isn't it?.

Anno: I think I can continue to make films because the next one will be based on another person's work and the methodology is live-action. Anyway, I want to keep making as many films as possible while I have the chance. That's all I have right now. I don't seem to be able to have a family of my own, and I seem to be in a place that is far from being as happy as others. There will always be loneliness, but for now, I have no choice but to keep doing what I can with the energy I have. I think this is probably the best time in my life to create and leave something behind.

--What direction do you want to take as a director, and where do you hope to get to?

Anno: I don't think I have a goal. I think it would be boring if I had a goal. It's over when you reach your goal. It would be nice if I could find another goal at that time, but if not, that's it. I always leave things up to chance, and play things as they come.

--What do you think you are looking for in a film?

Anno: I have no idea what it is. I think I'm doing it because I don't know. Maybe.

Yoshiyuki Sadamoto: The Other Side of the Story (Newtype 12/1997)

- Translated by Riki
- Source: http://anime-room.jp/modules/evangelion/eva-doc/siryou10.html

As the anime "Eva" reaches its conclusion, another story remains behind.

This is Yoshiyuki Sadamoto's manga "Neon Genesis Evangelion" (currently serialized in "Shōnen Ace(*1)").

- 1) A monthly shōnen manga magazine in Japan published by Kadokawa Shoten, started in 1994. Unlike the big shōnen weeklies with circulation figures in the millions, Ace is aimed at a less mainstream audience, and has a particular emphasis on anime tie-ins. (Wikipedia)

The fourth volume of the comic has been released, and the series will resume in the January issue (on sale November 26).

We had a direct and exclusive interview with the manga, whose future development is expected to be even more exciting!

・・・ Yoshiyuki Sadamoto

Born on January 29, 1962 in Yamaguchi Prefecture, Japan. Blood type A.

Became an animator after graduating from Tokyo Zokei University.

Active as a character designer and animation director.

Representative works include the movie "Royal Space Force: The Wings of Honnêamise" (character designer), the original video animation "GunBuster" (animation director), and the TV series "Nadia, The Secret of Blue Water" (character designer and animation director). He was also the character designer and manga artist for Neon Genesis EVANGELION.

A member of Gainax.

・・・ *Characters moving in a "Shōnen manga(*2)" style.*

- 2) Japanese comics marketed towards young teen males between the ages of 12 and 18 The age group varies with individual readers and different magazines. (Wikipedia)

With the end of the anime "Neon Genesis Evangelion" with this film version, I think "Eva" fans are going to focus more and more on your manga. What do you think?

In the anime, they don't create a story with "answers". They just plant a seed and let the audience figure out the rest on their own. I think manga will be a little different. I prefer to have a clear statement, so I hope to draw in that direction, even if it is poorly done. To tell the truth, I really like "Doraemon" and "Anpanman", and I can be moved to tears by something so simple. But in the end, because of the difficult content of "Eva", it's still difficult to understand.

Sadamoto-san's "Eva" has a somewhat orthodox "Shōnen manga" feel to it. Do you have any favorite manga or other works?

I love Kazuo Umezu's "The Drifting Classroom", the anime "Gamba no Bouken", Leiji Matsumoto's "Galaxy Express 999", and when it comes to Shōnen manga, this is my favorite. What these three have in common is that the main character travels in search of his place in the world. Even when things are over, they don't go back to where they came from, they go out again to find their place in the next adventure. It's cool. In Shinji's case, seeking a place to live means finding a way to live with the people he's currently with, and I'm wondering if there will be an adventure-like episode for Shinji in the manga.

Right now, the main character is stuck in one place.

While aiming for a "Shōnen manga" style, the main character is not a simple and clear-cut hero image, but has a complex mind.

The main character of "Eva" focuses on the world as seen from Shinji's point of view, but in the end, I created the character Shinji thinking about how I would think now, or how I would have thought when I was 14 years old.

What kind of boy were you yourself?

I think I was pretty sociable. But I didn't like to stand out. In terms of characters, I was probably more like Kensuke. I wasn't that straightforward, honor student type, and I was often told that I was calm. It seems that I give up quickly, but in fact I am persistent. I wasn't what you'd call a delinquent, but I did a lot of bad things and reflected on them. I think that part of me is similar to Shinji in the manga.

The Role of Characters in Manga

In the manga version, you've added original parts to the story setting and the personalities of the characters that differ from the anime.

Actually, the manga was the first to start talking about communication with people. I thought that the main focus of animation would be the battle against Angel, but Anno-san also shifted towards communication. That's why I've been trying to change my approach lately. I thought I'd venture away from the main theme of the anime version, which is the failure of communication. The personalities of the characters are also gradually becoming different from the anime.

In the manga, Asuka also appeared in the recently released volume 4, what kind of girl are you planning to make her?

Asuka's personality is similar to the anime in that she pretends to be a good girl and two-faced. However, I hope that Asuka will become someone Shinji can respect and admire as a person of the opposite sex. Sometimes they're friends, sometimes they're rivals, but sometimes they're opposites.

In the story where Asuka and Shinji form a unison to defeat Angel, I didn't dare to draw the kissing scene that was in the anime. From a man's point of view, the first kiss is a fascinating event. But when you think about what a kiss is, it's the first time you are physically connected to the girl you like. I think it's more realistic for me to have a psychological connection first. I also felt that the emotional connection between a man and a woman could be depicted more purely in a 14-year-old than in an adult. The scene I drew in the manga where they dance to the music is like a kiss for me.

In the manga, Asuka's birth is supposed to be a test tube baby.

Asuka has a very painful twisted side to her, and I wanted to bring that out strongly. Asuka is not a child born of heterosexual love. Asuka's mother was never loved by a man, and she thinks that she can live without a man. But somewhere in her heart, she wants a father or a masculine figure, and so she depends on Kaji. That's how I hope to portray her.

What about Ray?

From Shinji's point of view, if Asuka is the symbol of the opposite sex that he longed for, then Rei is the symbol of motherhood. She seems to have the genes of Shinji's mother. If I had to choose between Asuka and Rei, I'd probably go with Rei. She has a maternal quality in her, and when Shinji feels like he's about to lose it, she's always there to gently "rebuke" him. Rei says to Shinji, "You're running away again," which is pretty harsh. If the two were friends, they would have been cut off from each other, but for some reason, they are not. That's because a mother never gives up on her child. I wonder if Rei is like that person for Shinji.

What he will do to portray Shinji in the future.

As the manga series continues, Shinji seems to be growing up, expressing his own will and so on. How do you see him changing in the future?

Growth doesn't mean that people can change so much in their essential nature. Even if at first glance it looks like he's grown up, I'm not sure that's true. That's why I think I have to beat him up once he seems to have become a positive, mature person, making friends and finding the opposite sex he's interested in.

Up until now, Shinji has been able to blame everyone around him for his cynicism, including his father and uncle. However, as you grow up, that doesn't work anymore. People can be hurt by what you say or what you do. So from now on, Shinji will not be able to get away with things by staying in his shell and keeping quiet, as he has done in the past, but there may be more tragic things to happen to him in the future.

It's still a long way off, but what will the end be like? Will it be about the connection between Shinji and Asuka like the anime?

That's the hard part. I don't know how it will turn out yet. I want to make a happy ending, but it's difficult to say what is happy. The movie version is happy in its own way. Humans are nothing when they are born and at the moment of death, so if the process of living is not enjoyable, they cannot live. Shinji had a hard time, but he wanted to live. That's why he's happy. Still, on the other hand, as a shonen manga, I wonder if there could be a more straightforward happy ending.

What do you think will be the key to the story in the future?

In the end, I think it comes down to my way of life itself. In order to portray the process of Shinji's decision to live, I myself have to say, "My life was good.". I haven't lived long enough to be able to look back and say that, but I'm going to go through a lot of trial and error so that I can say that my life was good, and as a result I hope that I can make Shinji say, "Oh, so that's how I should think.".

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What did you think of this interview, which covered a variety of topics? The manga is about to get even more exciting, so stay tuned!

Hideaki Anno: What did Yoshifumi Kondo look at? (Animage 04/1998)

- Translation: Riki
- Source: https://web.archive.org/web/20130111140613/http://johakyu.net/lib/2007/07/2007-07-27-000545.php

From the memorial feature on Yoshifumi Kondo (Monthly Animage, April 1998 issue)

-Yoshifumi Kondo, a rare animator who left a great mark on the world of animation as an indispensable right-hand man for Isao Takahata and Hayao Miyazaki, passed away on January 21, 1998 at the age of 47. With the help of his bereaved family and many other people, this magazine looks back on the many works that Mr. Kondo left behind. He was one of the world's most "skilled" animators.

AM: What was the first work that made you aware of Kondo-san's name?

Anno: I think it was Anne of Green Gables (1979 TV series). After that, I became aware of Kondo-san's name in Gamba no Bouken and The Gutsy Frog.

AM: What was your impression of him as an animator?

Anno: I met him when I was working on "Grave of the Fireflies", and he always seemed to be smiling. But I'm really glad that we were able to work together at that time. I think that Mr. Kondo was one of the best animators in the world. I'm very sorry for what happened.

AM: For example, compared to Hayao Miyazaki, is Kondo-san's art and timing completely different in terms of personality?

Anno: Yes, they are different. I feel that Kondo-san's acting is more natural. I think the timing and facial expressions of Mr. Miyazaki's work are very manga-like. If I had to choose between good and bad, I'd say they're both good.

AM: In Only Yesterday (1991 film), I think he went for the ultimate in realistic, naturalistic movement in his work with Takahata.

Anno: As long as it's a picture, it's a manga. I don't think it's suitable for replacing the play that real actors are doing. I thought it would have been better to animate the original drawings for the scenes when the main character was a child, and use live-action for the depiction of reality in the present. I thought it was good that they tried to do that with drawings, but even if two of the best people in the world had tried, I don't think they would have been able to express it well. It would have been impossible for me. I think this is the most difficult part of animation.

Human beings cannot escape death, so I think it is unavoidable, but even so, I think it was a little too early.

Akio Satsukawa: Love & Pop Theatrical Booklet (1998)

Source of translation: Bubbles/Die-Silent from the Korean translation of the booklet.

Akio Satsukawa worked on twelve Evangelion episodes, Love & Pop is another live action movie directed by Anno, Satsukawa's only other collaboration with him besides editing for the earlier Nadia, and a limited consulting role for 1.0 and 2.0. This was also republished later in Quick Japan no. 17 along with other interviews.

Interviewer: Mr. Satsukawa, have you been working on movies all the time?

Satsukawa: No, before I became a scriptwriter, I was a freeter [Japanese Wasei-eigo term, someone who lives on a part-time job]. My last job as a part-timer was animation editing.

Interviewer: Writing a script was your goal from the start?

Satsukawa: No, I wanted to be a director, but to become a director, you usually become an assistant director or a scriptwriter. I chose the latter. So I submitted my script to a scenario contest, the judge must have been stupid. So I thought, I need to find someone who'd recognize me, so I sent the script to Mr. Jissoji. That's how I was acknowledged by Mr. Jissoji and started scriptwriting work.

I feel that things started to work for me only in the 90s. In the '80s, nothing went the way I liked. I started to see the way to scriptwriter only then. Before that, I kept myself as far away from movie-related work as I could. If everything you know in life is just a filming set, you'll get insulated, you'll fall into self imitation. So I worked as a construction site overseer, a waiter.. To be honest, I want to start a part time job even at this moment.

Interviewer: Seeing the movies, I feel like you really get along well with Mr. Jissoji.

Satsukawa: No, more like I'm compromising with him. I'm also compromising a lot with Mr. Anno. We are very different people personality-wise. It's just that I had a previous relationship with Mr. Anno when I worked on animation editing, so (when working on Evangelion) things went smooth. If this (Evangelion) was our first encounter as scriptwriter and director we would have had a major fight.

Meeting Hideaki Anno

Interviewer: So, your first meeting with Mr. Anno was when you participated in "Nadia: the secret of Blue Water" as an editor, right?

Satsukawa: That's right. The editing of Nadia was originally planned to be done by Mr. Furukawa from Group Tack and Mr. Ogata who once worked at Mushi Production, but both of them were unable to do it due to their schedules, so other editor got the job. But there was trouble between Mr. Anno and the said editor. That's how the office I worked in got the job after the 10th episode. He looks like a troublesome person to deal with, so you try it Satuskawa, was the gist of it when they gave me the job. Since I am an aspiring director, they hoped I could communicate with directors in a more candid manner. But, I knew about Royal Space Force, but I didn't know about Gainax, since I wasn't really interested in such a field.

Interviewer: So, how was it like to actually work with him?

Satsukawa: After 10 minutes of editing together, I thought, "This is a very talented person." He knows the feel of a film cut. Many people know about two cuts, but not many people know about a cut. (note: this must be some very specific animation-director-lingo) Apparently, Mr. Anno also liked me enough, he started to make suggestions.

I haven't watched many animations, I was studying the editing of live-action movies. So while we're working together, since we're in the same generation age-wise and for that, we watched the same movies, so there was a time I pointed out a certain line's motoneta (元ネタ, もとネタ, an original source of parody, plagiarism, or homage), Mr. Anno blushed like a girl and asked 'We're not supposed to do this?" I said, "No, it's okay." Well, we're more like-minded than I thought. Sort of.

Interviewer: Later, at the beginning of Eva, you made your screenplay debut as a scriptwriter with Mr. Jissoji's "The Watcher in the Attic," Did Mr. Anno saw it?

Satsukawa: No, he didn't watch "Attic".

Interviewer: So he asked you (to be his writer) out of the blue?

Satsukawa: Right. He probably never read what I wrote. At the first meeting, I said I've never seen a robot anime and I can't write it, he said I could write a drama. Then it's okay, I replied.

Interviewer: So, what was your first job (as a writer of Evangelion)?

Satsukawa: Episode three, 'A phone that doesn't ring.' Episode 4 ("Rain, After Running Away") is also me. As for the fourth episode, I just couldn't accept that Shinji and Toji were on good terms at the end of the third episode in Mr. Anno's original draft, so I told him this kind of anime-like development must be spat out. I told Mr. Anno, that it would be natural for any boy to run away if you're told 'get in the robot' out of blue, and like that, I wrote episode four.

Episodes 5 and 6 were relatively simple. The final product wasn't much different from my draft. For example, the only description of Ayanami's room in Mr. Anno's memo was simple 'bleak room.' So I wrote down her room based on my experience of seeing such a room when I was working part-time.

Interviewer: You actually saw a room like that?

Satsukawa: Yes. That was when I worked as a part-time plumber. I went to exchange packing, and I remember going to an apartment that looked exactly like Ayanami's room.

Interviewer: Come to think of it, I talked to Mr. Hiroyuki Yamaga (one of the founding members of Gainax) before, and he said that Eva's psychological play was largely due to Mr. Satsukawa, you.

Satsukawa: Psychology. It was me who first brought up the term "hedgehog dilemma" in episode 3. And I think the addition of episode 4 gave Mr. Anno an opportunity to explore the inner world of the characters. And maybe it's because my interpretation of the characters didn't follow the established convention of anime.

Interviewer: There are a lot of internal monologues in the second half of the show, was that your job, too?

Satsukawa: No, what we've seen in the second half is Mr. Anno's inner world. Normally, you don't do internal monologues in live-action movies, right? Even if you try, it doesn't work well. Famous "Eva" lines are almost without exception, belong to Mr. Anno.

Continuity with Eva

Interviewer: So, back then when everyone was like, Is Eva going to be really completed this spring or not? I met Mr. Anno at the end of last year (1996), and he already told me a little bit about Love & Pop. It was such chaos back then and he was talking about the movie, and even then I never thought he would get to it this quick. (laughs)

Satsukawa: That's understandable. It was November last year when I was asked to write the screenplay for DEATH. I also heard from Mr. Anno back then that he wanted to do "Love & Pop" during the meeting (related to DEATH). I thought he was running away from Eva to say such a thing. (laughs). One time, he spent an hour talking about Jumborg Ace during the meeting session. (laughs) Although, in the case of Love & Pop he also talked to Mr. Nanli, a producer, so I thought maybe he could be serious about it. Even then, it was going to be a 10 million yen independent movie or a quiet late-night TV Tokyo movie.

Interviewer: And it became like this.

Satsukawa: Yes. He got investors, several companies, so we have a budget of 100 million yen.

Interviewer: Can we say that, to some degree, it was, for want of a better word, an escape for Mr. Anno, to end Eva quickly and do something more joyous to him?

Satsukawa: That would be fair. I think he was able to bear through Eva because he was seeing Love & Pop as his next project. Without it, Mr. Anno would have been defunct for two years at least.

Interviewer: Well, I was surprised to see him starting the next project this quickly. If you think about it, making your magnum opus like Eva and taking a long time for your next project could be ruinous. The expectations would soar, and you'll be pressured by it. Was it Mr. Anno's intention to avoid such things?

Satsukawa: I think played some part, and I think he simply liked the original source. He kept saying he was attracted to the main character.

Interviewer: There's something about Love & Pop, that feels like it's a sequel to Eva. This is my personal opinion, of course, but to me it seems both works share the common theme of 'communicating with other people'. Did Mr. Anno mention such an idea?

Satsukawa: We didn't talk about communicating with other people and such, but I did feel it was going somewhat similar way with Eva.

Interviewer: The shooting script also starts with the line, "Disgusting."

Satsukawa: The script says that trashes are floating in the ocean at the first cut. I thought, then it'd be good to start with "Disgusting", so I put the line in. And the starting date of it is July 19, 1997, the release date of "THE END OF EVANGELION".

Interviewer: In the released film, "Disgusting" was edited out. Did you think it's a little too much to have a clear continuity?

Satsukawa: Well, since the line was kept until the shooting script, it was a last moment decision (to leave it out).

Interviewer: The script (of Love & Pop) is very faithful to the original novel. Would be rude to say it's a rip-off, though.

Satsukawa: Mr. Anno wanted to make a documentary of some sort in the first place. I wrote a draft where Mr. Anno himself stars and filming a girl, in a format of documentary.

Interviewer: That could have been fun in its own way, I guess.

Satsukawa: With the budget of 10 million yen that was more appropriate, I think. I think one of the reasons why Mr. Anno changed the course was because he saw Mr. Hirano Katsuyuki's work named Yumika and thought, shocked, that he could never present himself like that. And since he got a 100 million yen, he must have thought he should make a real movie.

Interviewer: After seeing the movie, I feel like one could still feel that this movie was aiming for a documentary at one point. Wouldn't it have been better if you stuck to that idea?

Satsukawa: Maybe. (laughs)

Interviewer: Well, uh, Mr. Anno is, he says it is a private film, but he's the kind of person who's not really good at presenting himself in his work. In the case of Eva, I think it was possible because it was filtered through anime format, but to come out as your raw self in live action movie... would be a totally different story. Am I getting it right?

Satsukawa: Maybe.

Interviewer: I'm totally being intrusive I guess (laughs)

Satsukawa: In the first draft, there was also an element of hamedori. (point of view pornography) Mr. Anno himself and the girl.

Interviewer: Hamedori? To be honest, *Love & Pop* has the feeling that Mr. Anno is standing at the end of Eva's last point, taking half a step forward, and looking around hesitantly. Of course, it still feels inspired, and it's a good movie, befitting Mr. Anno's fame.

Satsukawa: I like the movie. This is my favorite work I've ever done with Mr. Anno, including Eva. I just like it when the girls are filmed prettily (laughs).

Interviewer: But the way you filmed the girls, I'm pretty certain about this, by the way, you really weren't aiming to set up each characters.

Satsukawa: Right. It was I who wrote that four girls are actually one person's split identities. In conventional drama three other girls would have been redundant. It would have been more dramatic to make a story out of Hiromi's relationship with the men she prostitutes herself, but Mr. Anno asked me to show all four of them properly.

Interviewer: True to the original novel.

Satsukawa: Yes. But even when they merge as one in the latter half (of the movie), four personalities continue to exist. …So, Mr. Anno said he should see the girl first or the story could go anywhere. That's why, from mid-July, after the girl was casted, I started writing the actual screenplay.

Interviewer: A pretty normal girl was picked.

Satsukawa: That's right. Mr. Anno insisted it from the start. That he wasn't interested in the so-called kogal's prostitution story. She's more normal than the original.

Interviewer: What's your favorite part of the movie, Mr. Satsukawa?

Satsukawa: Hiromi waving her hand, parting with her friend. And how should I put it. Parts where Mr. Anno's germaphobia is projected?

Interviewer: Obviously, there are a lot of scenes where you're looking at a girl's underwear in an up-skirt angle, but it's not sexy at all. Mr. Anno is pretty perverted it seems. (laughs)

Satsukawa: No, isn't it a germaphobe? Even in Eva, we see many nude scenes but they're not sexy at all.

Interviewer: One might say the direction of perversion is different.

Satsukawa: He's different from me in that regard. I felt that ever since Nadia. During the production of Death, when Mr. Anno introduced me to someone from the production company, he said "I don't get along with this person very well."

Interviewer: But maybe Mr. Anno likes that part of you, Mr. Satsukawa. Since you have something he does not. …By the way, in the movie we saw a guy goes to the video room (note: a cheap motel where minors go to have sex) with Hiromi and he looked suspiciously like Mr. Anno (laughs)

Satsukawa: The same look (laughs)

Interviewer: Was it Mr. Anno's intention?

Satsukawa: On the day of the costume selection, they had Mr. Tezuka Toru wear a Peking Man t-shirt. So I said, if you'd do that, why not put a pink towel around his neck and let him carry a bottle, too.

Interviewer: But that's totally Mr. Anno's fashion! (laughs)

Satsukawa: Complete with sandals, too. The costume meeting was around the time when the shooting began and the whole scene began working.

Interviewer: That part really caught my eyes. …So, the final scene of the published movie, is completely different from the original script.

Satsukawa: They went all the way to the shooting location with the script, so I guess they intended to follow the script, they just had some various reasons that prevented it, I heard.

Interviewer: So that's how it ended up with the scene where the girl is walking through the gutter in Shibuya. (laughs) I really love that last scene, by the way.

Satsukawa: Yes, I like it too. So you see, Mr. Anno has a way of surprising you when he's faced with unexpected adversity.

Interviewer: When he can't follow the script, he pops up the most ridiculous idea on spot. That's the strength of Mr. Anno.

Satsukawa: Precisely.

Interviewer: Mr. Satsukawa, it seems you only work with directors like Mr. Anno or Mr. Jissoji.

Satsukawa: Bunch of cult classics (laughs). Funnily enough, personally, I am not like that. In Eva, for example, I think the part where my personality was truly projected wasn't this Kaworu part, but episode 15.

Interviewer: It's the episode of Misato and Kaji's love drama, where we don't see any Angels, right?

Satsukawa: No Angels, only a single cut of Eva. Well, I am a fervent fan of David Lynn and Akira Kurosawa. Naruse Mikio, too.

Interviewer: So you're not actually talented at cult movies?

Satsukawa: I'm afraid I don't have such quality. I didn't send the script to Mr. Jissoji because I was a fan of Ultra Seven. I read Edogawa Ranpo only after starting to work with Mr. Jissoji.

When the script is mostly completed, Mr. Jissoji and I usually talk about music choices. The alien from the episode "Flower" of "Ultraman Tiga" was brought from Puccini's opera "Manon Lescaut", that's why he's named "Alien Manon of the Riskaut Nebula." The music was "Scuoti Quella Fronda Di Ciliegio" from "Madama Butterfly". Three characters also got their motifs from Butterfly, Suzuki, and Goro.

Interviewer: You're very well versed in such things, I see. Then, Mr. Satsukawa, is the classics used in Eva your job, too?

Satsukawa: I picked the cello piece that Shinji plays in episode 15. If I knew that "DEATH"s OST would win first place in Oricon, I would have cared more about the movie, too.

Interviewer: "Love & Pop" also used one of the most famous classical music.

Satsukawa: Mr. Anno asked me to pick for him again, so I ran away. (laughs) I'm not involved in the selection of songs in the movie (Love & Pop).

Interviewer: I've been interested in the relationship between Mr. Satsukawa and Mr. Anno for a long time, and it was fun to hear the story. I'm also looking forward to a work directed by Mr. Satsukawa yourself.

Satsukawa: I'm thinking of stopping screenwriting after next year. I will definitely become a director before the Second Impact hits.

Hideaki Anno meets Hideki Noda: Soaring from two-dimensional space (Newtype 05/1998)

- **Translation:** Riki
- **Source:**: http://anime-room.jp/modules/evangelion/eva-doc/siryou12.html#top

When you see a cool animation, does your heart skip a beat? That is, without a doubt, the heartbeat of a living person. Anno Hideaki, the champion of the two-dimensional space, felt the awesome feeling of a living body for the first time when he saw Noda's play. In this interview, he meets the charismatic Noda Hideki and talks about his fascination with the world of theatre.

Hideki Noda

Born in Nagasaki Prefecture in 1955. Playwright, director, and actor. After working for Gekidan Yume no Youminsha, which was at the forefront of the 1980s theater boom, he went to London to study theater. In 1992, he founded a theater production unit called "NODA MAP" and has been actively performing.

Hideaki Anno

Born in Yamaguchi Prefecture in 1960. Director. He has been active in a wide range of fields, including animation and live-action, and has received high praise. With high expectations for his next work, he is currently working on an anime adaptation of the girls' manga "Kareshi Kanojo no Jijō". It is scheduled to air this fall. In addition, there are rumors that he is currently filming a porn video.

What are the similarities between Anime and the stage ?

Anno: As for Mr. Noda's stage performances, I saw the replays of "Red Demon" and "Kill". I also saw the first performances of "Half Gods" and "Kill" on video. I hadn't seen many stage performances before, but there were some I found interesting. But "Red Demon" was the first one that made a strong impression on me. I thought, "This is something you can only experience in a live performance". For example, when I saw Koki Mitani's stage play "Ganryuujima", I also thought it was interesting. I thought it was interesting, but it was too long. But "Red Demon" was amazing. Those four sweaty guys.

Noda: Acting is a physical art.

Anno: Also, I liked the script. I think Mr. Noda's plays have a good rhythm. It's speedy.

Noda: Isn't animation also a world of rhythm?

Anno: That's right. I think that's the most important thing. The rhythm of the script. There is a certain beauty in the appearance of a script, like a long line of dialogue suddenly appearing in a neat sequence of lines.

Noda: Oh, yeah. There is.

Anno: Yeah, that's right. I really liked the rhythm of the lines. There's a several lines of long and solid dialogue between the short lines.

Noda: Then you can tell a good script without reading the words (laughs).

Anno: It can be represented by a graph.

Noda: You can say that.

Anno: I like your graphs. A graph of the amount of words.

Noda: The animation would definitely need to have that kind of rhythm, too.

Anno: Yes. But there are pauses in anime. I know it's a small thing, but it happens to me that I don't need a single frame to close a cut.

Noda: What is that?

Anno: There are always six frames per second with closed mouths (Note 1), and it is always stopped for a quarter of a second. I wondered why they would stop there. I heard that it doesn't feel right unless it's there, but I think the creator's intuitive sense for speed is rather slow. In normal anime, I can't help but notice the unnecessary pauses. I think it would be much more pleasant if it were tighter.

Noda: If you don't up the tempo, the real pauses don't seem to be alive. In order to show something really beautiful, I want to show something that makes you feel like it's abnormal.

Anno: Yeah. I cut out the unnecessary pauses, like no one speaks for 40 seconds (editor's note: "Eva" episode 22), then you finally understand its point.

Noda: In both animation and theatre, there is a time limit. If you want to express something real in a limited amount of time, you have to exaggerate or omit something somewhere. Eventually, that's what Kabuki is all about. I think Kabuki is the origin of why Japanese people love anime so much.

Anno: The Japanese allow that symbol. The other day, I saw Shakespeare for the first time. It was "King Lear" with Ikkei Watanabe. I thought it was almost like an anime. It's a world of fake things. They were forcing the audience to follow the rules of fake things. If the set is tilted 45 degrees, it becomes a wilderness, and if it is tilted back 45 degrees, it becomes a royal palace. The audience pretends that they are not there. I felt that this world of rules was very anime like. I thought, "It's really nice, it's like watching an anime. It's a world that's separated within a frame, isn't it? It's already symbolically constructed. If the customer doesn't get the rules, everything breaks down. It's just like anime.

Note 1: When drawing a scene where a character speaks in a normal animation, a wide open mouth, a medium mouth, and a slightly open mouth are drawn as one movement. It is said to be an industry convention that the last mouth is always "closed", but in Anno's works, this is avoided in order to increase the tempo.

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NODA MAP: Where Hideaki Anno found Uehara in Love & Pop

Uehara, who is said to be the alter ego of Hideaki Anno, appears in "Love & Pop. Toru Tezuka, who played this role, had appeared in NODA MAP's stage production of "Kill" ('97), which Anno went to see, and was asked to play the role. "Mr. Tezuka is good, isn't he? I sense the feeling that things are going wrong around him." Tezuka's role was that of a slightly insane traveller. Anno saw in him something similar to Uehara, an eccentric and traumatized man.

By the way, Mitsuru Fukikoshi and Ikkei Watanabe, the other actors in "Love & Pop," are also famous stage performers who have appeared in "NODA MAP. Akinori Hano, who has appeared in the movies "Mothra 1" and "Mothra 2" and in TV dramas, is also a regular member of NODA MAP.

NODA MAP" pursues the dynamism that only a stage production with excellent actors can provide. The actors run around the stage from beginning to end, delivering their lines as if they were bullets. The overwhelming power of their movements and voices fascinates the audience. They make the audience feel their breath and heartbeat, something that is rare in everyday life. (Noda)

Half Gods" (based on the novel by Hagio Mochito), which Anno saw on video, is a work from Noda's "Yume no Yuminsha" period. The video is now on sale from Sony Music Entertainment.

The voice is an important element that makes you feel the live

Noda: The crucial difference between anime and theatre is the body. I envy anime because it is so easy to create beautiful women there.

Anno: Yes, Ayanami Rei doesn't appear unless it's in an anime.

Noda: But the more you get into it, the more you want to touch the "body" of the character. That's why I understand why anime fans get so involved in the voice actors. Because the only " physical " part is the voice.

Anno: That's right.

Noda: I really like the word "voice". Don't underestimate the power of the voice on stage. There are many people who can't act because of their voice. There are certain voices that people don't like.

Anno: I used to believe that the voice actor's voice was the only live part of the anime. But one day, I suddenly realized that the opposite was true. The voice actors' performance is a technique.

Noda: I understand it very well. It should be the physical part, but it's not physical.

Anno: Yes. It's just a symbol there. To unify the characters. A symbol in the form of a human voice.

Noda: You're trying to fit into something that isn't physical.

Anno: That's right. That's when I was really struck by the idea of animation. That's why I thought that live action and stage performances would be good. Because the body and the voice are in one.

Noda: So, why don't you just create the animation without using voice actors, and get the voices first?

Anno: That would be ideal. Presco (Note 2) is a method. Isao Takahata does it, and it's common in Disney and the U.S., but it's difficult to do in Japan because of the system. For the upcoming anime ("Kareshi Kanojo no Jijou"), I'm going to hold voice actor auditions. I'd like to see someone who is not a traditional actor.

Noda: For example, there are no actors who still cover their faces when they cry, right?

Anno: In Hayao Miyazaki's anime, everyone cries like that. I told him that no one cried like that, he said, "Yes, I do!". On stage, it might be a good idea to make people watching from behind understand though.

Noda: I don't really see the point to let people understand it.

Note 2: The opposite of post recording. A method in which the voice is first taken and then the animation is made to match it. The actor's performance takes priority.

Happiness in 2 dimensions, ??? in 3 dimensions

Noda: (After hearing that Anno doesn't eat meat or fish) You don't like the smell? I might know what it is. Like in anime... Anime doesn't have any smell. So, you're going to have less and less sex, aren't you?

Anno: That's right. That went on for a long time, and the reaction was intense. The food I eat has not changed, but the things I make have changed. I'm shooting a porno now.... I'm finally getting closer to something more like a real thing.

Noda: Pornography isn't strictly real, is it? It's closer to something that looks real.

Anno: That's right, though.

Noda: It's an illusion. Animation, even if you draw a picture from a great angle, costs absolutely nothing. You can even go from earth to space.

Anno: It's not realistic.

Noda: The manga that I think is theatrical is "Komawari-kun" (*3). The character's expression changes the moment you turn the page. It's similar to what actors do. You put on a mask and change your expression.

Anno: That manga is all about physical action.

Noda: It's all about the interesting poses of the people. It's almost like the fun of having a character change from one scene to the next, instead of having a beautiful actor. You know, I think flatness (two-dimensional) is a blessing for human beings. We live in three dimensions, don't we? One day, I was lying in a warm bed. It's two-dimensional, isn't it? When I realized that I had to stand up from there, I thought that's when human suffering begins.

Anno: Oh.

Noda: Trying to survive is three dimensional. I think that dreaming and dead bodies are both two-dimensional. I think death and sleep are very close after all. It's like when a person tries to raise his head, that's when the miseries begin? The fact that Anno woke up to the third dimension, to the physical body, can already be called misery (laughs).

Anno: Well, that's very unhappy (laughs).

Noda: Is that the same misery that Tsutomu Miyazaki (*5) already felt? That he has awakened to the third dimension, to the physical body...

Anno: But his misery was that he tried to bring two dimensions into the third dimension. That was a mistake.

Noda: 'Mistake' (laughs)? It's like you're wishing he hadn't failed.

Anno: He shouldn't have had that idea. If he had, he could have stayed a normal geek. In my opinion, it doesn't matter if you carry the misery of waking up in the third dimension, as long as you can move on.

Noda: You should be proactive in situations where you can move forward. When there's a social phenomenon going on, it's better to be proactive and step forward.

Anno: That's why I shoot pornography. I'd also like to direct a stage play if I could.

- 3 Komawari-kun : The main character in the gag manga "Gaki-Deka" written by Tatsuhiko Yamagami. The "death penalty" pose (instant gag) that this character does became popular in the 1970s. It is still common to see characters' faces changing instantly or making us laugh with their funny movements as one of the methods of comedy.
- 5 Tsutomu Miyazaki : Tsutomu Miyazaki was a Japanese serial killer, cannibal, child rapist and necrophile who murdered four young girls in Tokyo and Saitama Prefecture between August 1988 and June 1989. He was termed by the Japanese media as the "Otaku Murderer". (Wikipedia)

Even in animation, I want the actors to act properly.

Anno: (On visiting the rehearsal space of Noda's play) The atmosphere of a stage rehearsal is great, isn't it?

Noda: It's like a school festival, isn't it?

Anno: After the play is over, they won't see each other anymore. But that moment of unity is wonderful. In animation, the production team is not united, because the work is completely divided.

Noda: Unlike TV and movies, we work together every day on stage, so there's no choice but to love or hate.

Anno: That leads naturally to a situation of mixed feelings of love and hate. Animation production is a flowing process. It's like making a car, you make it according to a blueprint. The direction and storyboarding are done by different people.

Noda: Is that so? But it's the director's job to create a sense of unity, isn't it?

Anno: If we have enough time, we don't have to divide it up. There are dozens of people drawing the characters, so the play changes depending on the picture.

Noda: I guess it's the same with TV dramas where each episode has a different scriptwriter. It's terrible, isn't it?

Anno But what if the actors show their dislike for it?

Noda: Actors on TV don't do that. If the director asks them to raise their hands, they will. I would never raise my hand.

Anno: For my next film, I would like to be the sound director (*4) as well, if possible. I realized that if I didn't do that, I would end up with playing a Chinese whispers.

Noda What do you mean?

Anno: Even if I asked the sound director to pass on a message to the actors, they would only get a third of what I said. So I tried to tell them directly. However, on the set, actors have a unique barrier where they listen to what the sound director says but not to what others say. In this sense, I think the stage plays are good because they are thoroughly rehearsed. I think it's good to have actors who question the direction.

Noda: No one says anything?

Anno: No, they don't say it on the site, but they say it later at a bar. I think they should say it at the beginning.

Noda: Oh, that happens to stage actors too (laughs).

- 4 sound director : In anime production, there is usually a sound director who is responsible for the recording process, apart from the director of the main story. It is the role of the sound director to give instructions to the voice actors.

Stage and visuals. And what comes after that?

Noda: Would you really like to direct a stage play?

Anno Yes. The stage is nice, isn't it?

Noda: Actually, it's not.

Anno: The grass is always greener on the other side?

Noda: Or rather, it's a job that doesn't pay well (laughs). The reason why the stage is not good is because it is not replicable. If you want to perform it again, you have to start all over again.

Anno: That's right. If something can't be mass-produced, it can't be a major work. But I think that's the beauty of it.

Noda Those of us who work in theatrical performances are very close to restaurants, aren't we?

Anno Oh, yes.

Noda: You need to have customers come to the restaurant to know what it tastes like. Only those who come know what it tastes like, and the number of people who come is limited. If the chef dies, you will never be able to eat his food again, and if the creator dies, you will never be able to see his play again. Movies are good, aren't they? You can watch them later and appreciate them.

Anno: Yes, the beauty of film is that it can be mass-produced and fixed. But with the stage, there are things that you can't see unless you go there. In "Red Devil," it was great to see the actress's underwear for a moment (laughs). Accidents like that, and the flow of improvising to follow up on them, is also different every time and that' s good, isn't it?

Noda: Yes. I was aiming for the momentary impression (laughs).

Anno: I've always wondered if it's possible to fuse the stage and the screen.

Noda: Sure, that's right. People who make animation can definitely shoot good images, can't they? Because they can draw good pictures.

Anno: Yes. I feel like the stage is an extension of the visual image.

Noda: Right. It's difficult to go from stage to visual images, though.

Anno: It's the same for me. The stage is far away from me. That's why I'm trying to reach out to it.

Noda: Beyond film, there may be the stage. If you get interested in acting and start filming actors more and more, there may be a stage beyond that.

Anno: People sometimes say that "Evangelion" is theatrical, but I didn't know anything about theater at the time. I think the goal is the same. I regret now that I should have seen a play earlier.

Noda: But not everything is enjoyable (laughs).

Anno: It's the same with anime (laughs).

Noda: Don't you want to be an actor?

Anno: I'm not confident in my face or voice. If you find a role that fits, please offer it to me (laughs).

(February 20, 1998, Shibuya, Tokyo)

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The connection between "Evangelion" and theater

In episodes 25 and 26 of the TV version of "Evangelion," the scenes were depicted as if they were conversations on a stage. In the 1980s, when the "Third Stage" led by Naofumi Konoue was active, the development of a character who asks himself questions in order to confirm himself, and after being thoroughly pursued, finds a point of reference was often seen in small theatrical productions. As a result of sticking to the rhythm of the dialogue, a stage style catharsis may have been born.

Regarding dialogue, Anno said, "Even if the illustrations are bad, if the script is good, it can be saved, so it has a high cost performance. I pay more attention to the dialogue than the illustrations in order to capture a wide audience."

The stage also appears in the film version as a mindscape. The puppet, the stage, the mirror, and the twins are universal motifs that represent another self and the world, and are symbolic representations. In terms of creating a sense of real theater performance, I would like you to pay attention to the 40-second silence scene in the elevator, where the tense tension between two people is expressed through the picture. This is similar to the 90's type of theater, "quiet theater," which explores the relationship between people. It is a coincidence that the internal expression of the characters in "Eva" synchronized with the theater that continues to examine the reality of human existence.

The depth of Anno's ability to look beyond symbolic expressions to the more nuanced aspects of human nature! And the judgment to choose the most effective way to approach the audience under the limited conditions. This is something that not even theatrical artists can possess.

Hideaki Anno vs. Kunihiko Ikuhara, What the Avante Gardemen have to say (NewType 12/1998)

- Article "What the Avante Gardemen have to say" from NewType October 1998, by Kimata Fuyu
- translation by Mark Neidengard
- Source: http://www.cjas.org/~leng/anno-ikuhara.txt

Constantly injecting new stories and excitement into the business, Anno Hideaki and Ikuhara Kunihiko discuss the state of anime production. Perfected, only to await collapse?! Amidst such unfavorable circumstances, they discuss their thoughts and hopes as members of the literary avante garde[*0].

"There isn't anyone trying to make 'me-anime' now, is there?" (Anno)

WHAT IS THIS NEW METHODOLOGY OF ANIMATION?

Ikuhara: I know "KareKano" ("Kareshi Kanojo no Jijou") is just about to start, but have you decided on anything like a regular style?
Anno: Regular style?
Ikuhara: Something like a set pattern.
Anno: No, not really. I haven't decided, or should I say, it hasn't come to me yet.
Ikuhara: Did you think of making it at the outset?
Anno: Somehow, nothing but an inkling came to me. There was no epoch-making "That's It!" Although, I _am_ thinking of stopping being limited by the bounds of time and space. (brief silence) Let's see...methodology... For "KareKano", if I try to do interesting things with a methodology that doesn't depend on the number of cels, it'll turn out just like "EVA". I'm tired of reusing cuts and depicting using freeze-frame rhythm. That was how I did "EVA". It's what I did since the "Top (wo Nerai!)" days. But, not counting on the number of frames, the methodology that shows things most effectively is exactly that. It's not a new methodology at all. To put it bluntly, settling into creatorhood may let you stay alive in life, but I just can't stand the thought.
Ikuhara: Can't stand it?
Anno: Yeah, can't stand it. Maybe it's okay for people over 50 to get set in their ways as creators, but I intend to fight it as much as possible. Or so I say, and yet no matter how much I speak of seeking a new methodology, I can't leave the original work to people walking on the street. What I'm talking about is the influential work known as "Macross"[1]. In those days Yamaga (Hiroyuki), me, Sadamoto (Yoshiyuki), and Maeda (Mahiro) all began to get involved with anime because of our student part-time jobs. I could say that was how huge the talent of director Ishiguro (Noboru), who used that kind of unknown youngsters, was; the result of sensibilities drawn from deep within. Creators in those days had substance.
Ikuhara: I agree about the younger generations. It's hard when people don't think of anime as a venture. That's why there aren't any sure-fire aesthetics.
Anno: The reason the game business prospered and grew so fast is because it was a venture. But games have finally tanked too. It happened pretty fast, didn't it? Our generation is naturally a shallow one, and there's noone who's trying to overturn things. There isn't anyone trying to make "me-anime" now, is there?
Ikuhara: I just don't know about the people who'll be getting into the business from here out. This is a generation that loves both cel anime and digital anime. I personally get uncomfortable when the two are mingled.

WE'RE RIDING ABOVE THE SYSTEM

Anno: The first time I saw "Virtua Fighter"[2], I thought, is this what anime is up against? It was quite a shock. That's when I realized I'd have to level up somewhere other than the visuals, I guess right before I did "EVA". Visual impact is anime's strong point, but since games had followed on anime's heels, it had become a time when a methodology no different from the others just wouldn't cut it. All the cards had already been dealt, so we had no choice but to change the combination, or turn over cards that were thought to be taboo. That's what I mean when I say that "EVA" didn't use even a single new methodology.
Ikuhara: Ah, like what the media talks about as creatorhood when discussing animated works. But that's just an illusion, and actually in the anime business no such thing as a creator is anywhere to be found. All there are are people who were brought along by the founding of the system. The people who devise the form of the anime of today.
Anno: Right.
Ikuhara: The people who accomplished soemthing are all 50 or older. Those people are almost all associated with the early days of Toei Douga or Mushi Pro[3]. The people who came after that are all no good, they haven't done a thing. It's not that they haven't _made_ anything. It's that they didn't build the system at all. They're just riding on it, on the system that the people of the previous generation made.
Anno: Yeah. They can't seem to overturn it.

WHAT WILL THE SPREAD OF DIGITAL CHANGE?

Ikuhara: Well, there are currently a lot of people who talk about digital as a technique to make the presentation of anime more radical, but I think they're making a horrendous mistake. Wouldn't that just make using digital a technique for overhauling the presentation of cel anime that has taken 30 years to establish? That's no way to change the system of the animation production houses. It's just an attempt to go on riding the system we've already got.
Anno: Oshii (Mamoru)-san says "Now that the pioneers of anime have died, it will die with them." He says the history of anime ended long ago.
Ikuhara: Once there was a time when people were groping, saying "What methodology do we use to express ourselves?" The way things are expressed in modern anime comes from a fixed way of negotiating with the production houses, a way made by working backwards from cost-performance.[6]
Anno: That's limited animation[5] for you.
Ikuhara: Yeah. And what about our aesthetics? The aesthetics of people like us who find shadows fixed on the back side of cels beautiful are being processed through cost-performance. If cost-performance changes, my aesthetics are supposed to change too. Of course, the people who created form in the midst of such groping were the people of the first generation who created Japanese anime.
Anno: The origin was stuff like Disney animation, and we're just extensions.
Ikuhara: Thanks to the impending spread of digital, the aesthetics on screen will change. Because my emotions will get more and more messed up when that happens, I think the emotions that that we now consider beautiful will fall apart.
Anno: No, but, I can't stand CG shadows.
Ikuhara: Oh, really?
Anno: I hate them see...I guess they're just not crisp or something.
Ikuhara: Come again?
Anno: So, with brush shadows, when you make them fluffy, I just can't take it. It's just not manly. (laugh) Girlishness when trying to express aesthetics just sucks. Shadows should be crisp and definitive. "Seaweed" shadows weren't popular in the original robot anime.
Ikuhara: "Seaweed"?
Anno: When depicting the aesthetics of mecha, the wavy shadows.
Ikuhara: But weren't those shadows cutting edge for expression in those days?

"The human body is far better than CG." (Anno)

Anno: Yeah, well, I can stand Sakano (Ichirou)-san[7] and the other guys with good sense using them, but with everybody else they look like nothing more than seaweed. You wouldn't think anything but that the mecha had camouflage markings. Those aren't shadows. When we did "Ouritsu (Uchuugun)", it was totally counter to that. The shadows were crisp, and the highlights[7] did nothing but give the impression of light. If cel anime targets aesthetics it's all over. Both clothing and skin are the same except for color. Just give it up, and go for the gusto in some different area. No matter how hard you struggle, there are just some things you can't fight your way out of. The people who created the system at the outset understood this.
Ikuhara: I guess it's through that trial and error that the anime of today is made.
Anno: Recently I watched some "Kinchuu" ("Kingiyo Chuuihou!")[9]. As research for "KareKano". I thought that perhaps that was what gags and shoujo manga were. But it felt a little old.
Ikuhara: Old? It feels like things are divided into the the time before and after "Sailor Moon". I feel like it really infected the tastes at Comiket.
Anno: Yeah. Whether something's major or not at Comiket amounts to whether or not it gets made into erotic stuff. After all, the sex industry is strong no matter what era it is. As Tsurumaki (Kaguya) said, earnestly value all things equally. Both Hiromatsu Junko and Ayanami Rei. I can't express it in words, but I feel the same chasm within myself.
Ikuhara: I think it's the feeling of antisepticness. The impression that they don't smell like anything is good.
Anno: Yes, yes, exactly.
Ikuhara: Apparently stuff like unnecessary hair, or nose hair, isn't absolute. Of course, in pictures the characters don't actually have nostrils (laugh). I bet everyone would start hating pictures of girls if we drew nostrils on them.
Anno: Cel anime fans are more sterile than that.
Ikuhara: The idols of a decade ago felt really sterile. But recently actresses and TV talents are feeling less remote and more realistic.
Anno: Does that include us, by any chance? It's an existence where courage and familiarity seem to be draining away.
Ikuhara: If so, the place that the people who recognize the feeling of sterility are carrying with them in their thoughts will disappear.
Anno: That's why I'm going with the cel anime system.
Ikuhara: There's somewhere where we'll give up, isn't there. We're trying to fulfill our own ambitions virtually. I suppose if we were doing it for real we should be trying to make more properly ideal cities and better human relations. I can't really say it in anything but pedestrian terms, but, like with things like the Aum[*1] incident, I can understand the feelings of the people who want to reorganize the world.
Anno: In order to see a made-up drama, there are even people who neglect their real lives, right? That kind of person does things like become a seiyuu fan.
Ikuhara: I bet what they really wanted was to touch an anime character.
Anno: For something that could connect the virtual and the real, I too turned to the seiyuu. But that was a mistake. That's why I tried to show something different in "KareKano". But altering the existing system is tough.

THE COMPLEX ABOUT THE BODY

Ikuhara: On this point, Anno-san and I differ in our way of creating. I'm not trying to connect anime and voice that much. But if I have a sentiment close to that, I think it's the complex about the body. I have moments where I think that, not just anime, but _nothing_ can win against the human body. A while ago I was watching the Nagano Olympics on TV. There was this girl who was nothing special during her interview, but who became sublime when she started skating. It was only for instant while she was doing it, but I felt like God was dwelling in her body. A moment when I thought there was nothing more beautiful in the whole world. And it's not like her body changed, either. It's that kind of complex towards the human body that I've got. Even though my work is in anime, I have moments when I doubt we matter compared to a real body. When counting on the actors to do something, I wonder if what I'm actually looking for is corporeality.
Anno: Yeah, that happens.
Ikuhara: Could it be that what I'm seeking in the middle of a production is not the show, but the corporeality itself?

"I have moments where I think that nothing can win agains the human body." (Ikuhara)

Anno: Yeah. This past New Year's there was a part at Higuchi (Masatsugu)'s[10] place. We watched some American specials, and in _every_ case the CG was an utter bore. This special on the lives of stuntmen was more interesting. The human body is by far better than CG.
Ikuhara: I guess the reason Anno-san has been expressing an interest in the little theater recently and why I've been saying the same for a while, is because of this feeling of demanding corporeality. When I feel a real body right before my eyes, I feel like, it's all over, time to throw in the towel.
Anno: Yeah, that's right.
Ikuhara: Now this beauty of the physical body only exists at infrequent moments. Only for the moment of the drama is one an actor - after it's over one is someone else.
Anno: The first time I realized that was with Noda (Hideki)'s[11] drama. I thought, this is the real thing! Before that, within myself I felt that the only thing that gave the feeling of corporeality in the anime dimension were the seiyuu. That's why I kept on trying to express life. But I was deluding myself.
Ikuhara: Hahahahaha. Well, not only is that the case for Anno-san, but also in the so-called little theater boom of the 70's. A renovation right down to the roots. The couldn't touch anything with their hands, the people of that generation. Their path was pre-made, and they couldn't create anything by themselves. It was the first virtual generation.
Anno: Miyazaki (Hayao)-san said that we're the "first generation to value the the virtual and actual equally", but I say "What about you?".
Ikuhara: He may not be a generation, but he's certainly foremost among it. (laugh)

THE FEELING OF WANTING TO BE PRESENT FOR MOMENTOUS EVENTS

Ikuhara: I'll state up front that all Japanese fictional works, even for the little theater, are all manga.
Anno: Yeah. It's the manga-ization[*2] of the nation. Dramas are the same, nothing but either manga with an extremely tenuous grasp on reality or documentary-like variety shows.
Ikuhara: I can't say precisely what I mean by manga-like, but for one thing, such works can only show the totally familiar or the astoundingly distant. Aren't all popular songs that way? They can't speak to anything but minutae like someone's dress shirt, or about things like the edge of the universe that are so far away they can't be spoken of except in the imagination. They don't speak at all to the yawning gap in between. That's how I feel the world of manga is.
Anno: Perhaps we can be at ease in a fake world because we know it's a lie from the outset. That's how the creators of manga where you'd think "There wouldn't really be a teacher like that" make drama. That's how works like "Denpa Shounen", where you never know what's going to happen next, work.
Ikuhara: I read the feeling of seeking variety and such as wanting to seek corporeality.
Anno: Yes, a world where something is done with the body alone. Nothing else befits a documentary. A world that shows nothing of creation.
Ikuhara: Take "Utena" and "EVA". They take a fragment of our work and talk about us introducing impact into our animation, saying it's like Terayama Shushi[12]'s work or something. It's nothing that narrow, is it? I think that what appears in our works is the complex about the body that people who make made-up anime feel.
Anno: I use the word "lifelike-ness". Compred to that, cel anime is pretty and virtual. Because I feel a sense of thwarted life in current cel anime, I want to try to peek at it from a slightly different direction. Like trying not to use any of the established seiyuu.
Ikuhara: There are times when I want to stay away from impactful stuff and deal with the illusion. Saying one thing after another, I think everyone's deluded. Directors, animators, seiyuu, the audience, everyone is deluded while making and watching anime. I wonder if things aren't just fine that way? I don't want to brood over it. The first time I saw Terayama, I really loved it. My country bumpkin complex and my intelligencia complex give me my drive. Now that I think about it, that delusion was a godsend (laugh).
Anno: In the old days, I had never seen anything like real impact, and thought the whole thing was absurd.
Ikuhara: That's how it usually is.
Anno: Adjusting a set in real life was such a pain. Anime and movies are much cooler.
Ikuhara: That's why people quit doing theater when movies were invented. And that was precisely why I was so shocked when I saw Terayama. The pleasure of corporeality being possible. The pleasure of fiction. The kind of pleasure that makes strip-tease more engrossing than pornography.
Anno: In real life, bad things happen, like rowdy neighbors at a shop, but impact isn't virtual, is it?
Ikuhara: Movies are recordings, whereas the stage is a sort of "incident".
Anno: Just like the difference between a war you're in and a war you see on TV.
Ikuhara: It seems we can't savor the interest of becoming the people on the scene.
Anno: That's because impact is tough stuff. Movies can't offer anything more than a pseudo-experience.
Ikuhara: What propelled the 70's little theater boom was the feeling of wanting to be in the middle of things, wasn't it. How much of being in the middle of things is left these days? People worry about things that aren't yet firm and solid.
Anno: I thought of a lot of different stuff for "KareKano", but it seems impossible to do impactfully under the current system. All the same, starting around episode 9 a lot of inexperienced kids appear, the kind for whom it's their first time in front of a mic. We'll see what happens.
Ikuhara: That could be interesting.
Anno: Kuni-chan, you should come on too, as a teacher or something.
Ikuhara: I've gotten used to doing things halfway, but can I really? (laugh)
Anno: Ah, I don't need anyone who only does things halfway. (laugh)

Footnotes

[1] Superdimensional Fortress Macross ('82). With Mikimoto Haruhiko's characters, Kawamori Shouji's mecha and such, the talent of the young animators became evident and started a boom. Afterwards OVAs, movies, and toys were created.
[2] Virtua Fighter ('94). Sega's fighting game. With polygon images and real-life shots, it became a major hit. Not stopping at arcade sales, it's also availble in a home version for the Sega Saturn.
[3] Toei Douga. Established in '57. The mighty anime creation house that gave us such things as "Dragonball" and "Bishoujo Senshi Sailor Moon". Mushi Productions, established in '63 by Techou Daimushi. Created such things as "Tetsuwan Atom".
[4] Oshii Mamoru. Anime director. Specializes in nonsensical worlds and visual expression that tries to dismantle fiction. Major works include "Urusei Yatsura Beautiful Dreamer" and the "Mobile Police Patlabor" series.

[5] Limited Animation. Anime that, for economic and time-related reasons, must skimp on use of "commas". A second of animated film is made from 24 commas. Full animation would use a different image each comma, but limited animation might keep a frame before the eyes for 2-3 commas. To the human eye, that sort of trick still looks sufficiently like motion.
[6] A way made by working backward from cost-performance. Methods used today in Japan's anime industry, such as using cels to merely slide a character a step or two at a time to produce the effect of motion, reuse of commas (limited animation), and reusing cels in other shows (the bank system).
[7] Sakano Ichirou. An animator known as "Sakano Circus" who depicted speedy and frequently moving mecha action. Principle work is "Superdimensional Fortress Macross".
[8] Highlights. Transparent lighting.
[9] "Kingyou Chuuihou" ('91). TV anime. Product of Toei Douga. Anime taken from the shoujo manga serialized in "Monthly Nakayoshi". The series director was Satou Junichi.
[10] Higuchi Masatsugu. Special Effects director for the "Gamera" series. Assisted with the visual continuity for "Fushigi no Umi no Nadia" and "Neon Genesis Evangelion".
[11] Noda Hideki. Musician, producer, actor. Was interviewed along with Anno in the May issue of this magazine. Principle works: "Kill", "Rolling Stone" (for the stage).
[12] Terayama Shushi. Musician, author, poet, movie director, and so on, he was a many-faceted multicreator. In high demand, he not only did drama on stage, he did street theater and participated in experimental drama. Principle works include "Kegawa no Marie", "Shintokumaru" (theatrical), "Cast Off Books! Return to the City!" (movie). Died in '83. J.A. Seazar, who contributed to the music for "Shoujo Kakumei Utena", worked in Terayama's Theater Observatory "Ceiling Gallery".

Biographies

Anno Hideaki. Born '60 in Yamaguchi Prefecture. Producer, director. As a member of GAINAX, has been involved in numerous anime. "Neon Genesis Evangelion" became a runaway hit. In his new work starting in October, he tackles shoujo manga.

Ikuhara Kunihiko. Born '64 in Hiroshima Prefecture. Director. Was involved in the production of such things as "Kingyo Chuuihou!" and "Bishoujo Senshi Sailor Moon" at Toei Douga. Founder of the production company Be-PaPas. His latest work, "Shoujo Kakumei Utena", is heading toward a spring '99 theatrical release.

Translator's Notes

[*0] The word I translated as "avante gardesmen" is "gesakusha". Kyoko Selden, Senior Lecturer in Modern Languages at Cornell University, offers the following commentary on the meaning of "gesaku":

> "It literally means 'playful writing,' but what I was trying to say was its implication differs from age to age. Takizawa Bakin first comes to mind when I think of late Edo gesaku (not that he was so playful but he is thought of as having been content with 'romance' rather than seeking to discover a more serious genre). In Meiji, of course there are the works of Narushima Ryuuhoku and others, as well as Tsubouchi Shouyou's cricitisms of gesaku as opposed to the Realist modern novel (and Bakin was one of his prime targets). Then there is the return to, or rediscovery of, gesaku in the recent decades. So I couldn't think of a single word that fits all cases. The term parodist occurred to me because I was thinking of Inoue Hisashi who claims himself as such. If there is an element that is common to all those authors, after all it must be the attitude of playfulness, whether expressed in comedy-of- manners type satire, literary or social parody, or aversion from the idea of modern novel. I'm aware that some use 'light literature' or 'cheap literature' as a translation of gesaku, but I wonder if either is best. I don't have a good single word definition, but the brief discussion with you this afternoon led me to think that gesaku, from Meiji on at least, has the connotation of posed, pretended, or deliberate playfulness as a tool of social criticism and/or of literary or stylistic flourish. It always comes with a gesture, a pose, a persona."

[*1] Ikuhara is referring to the release of sarin gas in a Tokyo subway station on March 20, 1995 by terrorists belonging to the Aum Shinri-Ki, under the leadership of Asahara Shoko.

[*2] Anno uses the phrase "ichioku sou-manga" here, in imitation of a famous phrase about the "idiotization" of the Japanese nation ("ichioku sou- hakuchi-ka") coined by Hanamori Yasuji, sharp-tongued critic and editor of the "Kurashi no Techou". Another corruption of this phrase likens the hard-working Japanese population to a beehive: "ichi-oku sou-hatarakibachi".

Hideaki Anno: Disability Shapes Taste for the Imperfect (Asahi Evening News 03/1999)

- **Points of interest:** Anno speaks about his father's disability and how that influenced his works
- **Source:** Asahi Evening News, Sunday 10/3/1999
- **Reliability level:** Solid Tier 2 canon.

My father has only one leg. While working at a lumber mill he had his left leg seriously injured with an electric saw. He was 16 years old at the time. He wears an artificial leg below the thigh. He has trouble walking, so he used to stay at home.

He was running a tailor's shop with his wife in Ube, Yamaguchi Prefecture. He became a tailor because he could work sitting on a chair. He had no trouble pedaling the sewing machine.

Father had an operation at a local hospital, but the surgeon did a poor job. I often saw an edge of the bone still peeking out of the flesh. And he felt pain befcause his artificial leg didn't fit. After walking for a long time, he would take off the device and massage his thigh. So about the only time I went out with him was when there was a festival in town.

In my boyhood, father was melancholy. I often overheard him complaining to mother, "I wouldn't lose out to anybody if I had two healthy legs." As a small child I could understand how he felt about his handicap.

I think he was emotionally unstable. Maybe that's why he beat and kicked me when I did something wrong. Sometimes mother came to my rescue and ran away holding me in her arms. Father also said something very cruel to me, though I don't remember exactly what he said. It had the same connotation as what a frustrated mother might say to her unwanted child - "I wish you were not here."

When I was in senior high school, low-priced ready-made suits hit the market, and father couldn't make a living just running a tailor shop. So he began delivering newspapers. He made his rounds in the town on a bicycle. Maybe he wanted to show he could work like anybody else.

I think something in him changed after that. He stopped complaining around that time. He got a driver's license and often made a short trip with my mother.

Father says nothing about my productions. Maybe he does not understand animations. I meet him perhaps once every two or three years. I feel distant from my family.

But there is no doubt that I have been influened by father's physical handicap. I cannot love anything perfect. To me, robots without a hand or leg look better. In my animation "Tetsujin 28-go" (iron man No. 28), the robot loses his arm. I love that scene.

While in elementary school I would draw a robot in my notebook or in a blank space of the textbook, and then I would rub out a part of the body and show something that looks like a bone.

The robots that appear in my productions usually get injured in battle and end up in bad shape with a part of the body broken.

Something broken of deficient comes more naturally to me. Sometimes that thing is the body. Sometimes it is the mind.

Yoshiyuki Sadamoto: Interview with Yoshiyuki Sadamoto (Der Mond) (09/1999)

- Excerpt from an Interview with Yoshiyuki Sadamoto, published in 1999.
- Translated by Bochan Bird
- Source: Deluxe Edition of the artbook "Der Mond" in September 1999 http://eva.onegeek.org/pipermail/evangelion/2006-November/003855.html

The Initial Title was Alcion (Arushion)

In the first place, just what kind of story was Evangelion in the initial stages?

When the very first meeting was held before the title had even been decided, Anno had already provided the theme of "a battle between gods and humans". Both Anno and I -- our generation -- was influenced by Go Nagai, so making something on a grand scale meant it ended up like "Devilman". The character design request from Anno was that "the lead character is a girl, and has an older-sister type figure like Coach next to her," so it was structurally similar to "Gunbuster". So I first designed an Asuka-type girl as the lead character, but after "Gunbuster" and "Nadia" I felt some resistance to making the lead character a girl again. I mean a robot should be piloted by a trained person, and if that person just happens to be a girl then that is fine, but I couldn't see why a young girl would pilot a robot... So I remember saying to Anno, "It's a robot story, so let's make the lead character a boy." And just about that time, I was watching the NHK [public TV channel] program "Brain and Heart" and learned about the existence of the A10 nerve, and I told Anno about the idea that popped into my head at that time. That was the idea where "the dead mother is inside the robot, which is operated by mental/psychical bonding with the child. Moreover, parent-child relations are parched/strained due to the death of the mother at a young age." As soon as I had this idea I was filled with confidence that "This will work!" and I just whipped out a setting drawing. That setting drawing became the character chart for the Planning Papers.

What points did you take care for with that character chart?

An easily recognizable silhouette is also important, but I designed the characters so that their personalities could be more or less understood at a glance. For example, even the color and length of the hair expresses personality. I thought that Asuka would occupy the position of an "idol" in the Eva world, and that [Asuka and] Shinji should be just like the relationship between Nadia and Jean. And then I set Rei as the opposing "Ying" portion. It was my idea to have her wrapped in bandages. The most difficult was Misato. So I thought it would be interesting to have someone like the older girl next door as a military person. I really wanted to make her a character who changed her clothes constantly, but I have no fashion sense so I wasn't able to do it. (laugh) I imagined Misato as a looser girl who, taken to the extreme, would be sleeping with all the men at Nerv and so on. Furthermore, she would not think too seriously about all of that... Gendo and Fuyutsuki were modeled after Commander Ed Staker and Col. Alec Freeman from the TV series "UFO".

Were there any title proposals other than "Evangelion"?

One of the names proposed by Anno was "Alcion (Arushion)". But a robot story title that doesn't have a voiced consonant sound in it just isn't catching. So I pushed "Evangelion", which had been rejected once, as sounding stronger. We had talked a lot in the beginning about wanting a title like "Space Runaway Ideon (Legendary Giant God Ideon)", so I think I did push that. And to tell the truth, the story composition is also similar. For example, Nerv can be considered the same as the Solo Ship fighting a lonely battle against both humankind and the Buff Clan, and then there are the incomprehensible robots that can only communicate with children and tend to go berserk, etc. It might not be an exaggeration to say that if you add "Ideon" and "Devilman" together and divide by two, you get "Evangelion". (laugh)At that time the media venue also had not been decided yet, but I really wanted to do it as a TV series or movie instead of as an OVA. Sure, you can do higher quality with an OVA, but I felt that OVAs were a minor media compared to TV, so it was out of self- gratification [that I wanted to do it as a TV series]. When you are in Tokyo and constantly reading the anime magazines, you succumb to the illusion that OVAs are a major media. But when you live in the provinces like me, the anime selection at the video rental shops isn't that great, so you think of it as a more minor world.

Hideaki Anno: In the past 20 years, animation has been rather gradually becoming less, worse, or lower. (05/2005)

- Translated by Riki
- Source: https://web.archive.org/web/20130111140641/http://johakyu.net/lib/2007/07/2007-07-27-000565.php

At the time of the first issue of NT (New Type), Hideaki Anno was working on the pilot film of "Royal Space Force: The Wings of Honnêamise" at the newly established Gainax. He read the first issue at the studio where he was working.

Anno: When I saw the name of the magazine, I thought it would be more of a "Gundam" magazine.

At the time, people thought that "anime" was uncool, so I thought that's why they didn't use the word "anime" in the magazine's name.

Even so, the word "new type" is an anime term.

I had the impression that it was a bit of a mixed bag, since it included articles on entertainment other than anime.

At the same time, the other magazines were all about anime, so I had the impression that NT was the only comprehensive magazine.

Anno's first appearance was three months later, in the July issue. It was a "Naniwa(*1) Animator Special" featuring animators in the Kansai region.

- 1) generally means Osaka.

Anno: The feature was about animators in Osaka.

In my case, I was featured simply because I went to university in Osaka.

I was born in Yamaguchi Prefecture, and I didn't go to university very often (laughs).

He first appeared in the NT as an animator, but his later activities as a director are well known. Among other things, the public frenzy surrounding Neon Genesis Evangelion is unforgettable. Eva was even featured on the cover of the 10th anniversary issue of the magazine.

Anno: At the time, the media mix strategy was popular, but until then, manga and games were the mainstream.

However, my theory was that we should focus on the visual software called animation.

I couldn't find anyone who was willing to take on the project, but Shinichiro Inoue, whom I happened to meet again, was just starting up "Monthly Shonen Ace", and we were able to get Yoshiyuki Sadamoto's manga serialized.

After Eva, Hideaki Anno has been keeping his distance from animation production. In the past 20 years, has animation really progressed?

Anno: I don't think so.

I think it's either getting worse, or it's still going around the same place.

After all, even after 20 years, the mainstream is still "Gundam".

The fact that "Zeta" is included in both the first issue and the 20th anniversary issue is symbolic in terms of Japanese animation.

In closing, I asked him to speak straightforwardly about the future of NT.

Anno: Due to the nature of an anime magazine, you have no choice but to survive by parasitizing popular anime.

So as long as anime survives, NT will also survive.

It is ironic that NT is the magazine read by people whose souls are still pulled by the gravity of "Gundam," while people whose souls are trapped by the gravity of the earth are called "old types" and those who have been freed from that gravity are called "new types".

If the first issue and the 20th anniversary have "Gundam" on the cover, and the 10th anniversary has "Eva" on the cover, then the 30th anniversary cover will surely be "Eva".

So I'm sure the 30th anniversary cover will be "Eva".

Make your reservation now.

Hideaki Anno: Celebrating the Revival of Gundam as Tale (2005)

- Essay that was included in the first volume of the Aizouban edition of Yoshikazu Yasuhiko's Gundam: The Origin manga in 2005, as well as the North American edition that was released in 2013.
- translated by Melissa Tanaka

The world of Gundam, drawn once again as a Tale –that, I believe, is the greatest significance of this manga. Of course, we also have here Mr. Yasuhiko's distinctive art, the indescribable charm woven by his gentle, delicate lines, the characters and mobile suits in particular. Yet I feel the greatest pleasure of this "Yasuhiko Gundam" lies in the resuscitation of a Tale lost among our memories of First Gundam.

It has already been twenty-five years since the broadcast of First Gundam. I'm afraid the legacy of Gundam dwindled down to the mobile suits, in the form of plastic models as a business and military hobbyism. Even these mobile suits were summarized down to the protagonist mecha, Gundam, so that friend and foe alike were all uniformly Gundams. One could say this was inevitable: the pivotal creation that made Gundam a classic and drives the franchise expansion to this day is, of course, the mobile suit, represented by the RX-78 Gundam, a weapon bearing the elements of a character; and the way of the world is that characters are what ultimately remain with the audience. It's not a bad thing. I simply find it unfortunate that the Tale that enveloped the worldview and ideas on war presented in First Gundam ceased to function as anything more than a device for the mobile suit fantasy.

In recent years, in the world of anime and manga too, the hollowing out of mainstream culture and the putative rise of subculture severely diluted and eroded the standing of the Tale. Audiences have come to need only a work only as an escape from reality, as a comfortable dream, judging everything on the criterion of moe, while creators' intellectual paucity and the jumble of trivial touches have encouraged that structure. At the same time, TV-type mass consumption, which prizes instant gratification and simplistic results, laid the improverished grounds of contemporary Japanese entertainment, giving rise to masses that can only respond with praise for superficial details and technical proficiency; with tears, laughter, fear, or some outpouring of simple emotions ; or with identifying and particularism. And here we are, in this stagnant state of affairs. I am stuck here myself. It's embarrassing and frustrating, and I also regret that I contributed to it. I want it fixed. The sooner, the better.

That is why I am so glad that Gundam, the animation brand with the largest market in the industry, is showing us here a true Tale through the medium of manga. I want as many people as possible to reconfirm and savor the essence and allure of Tales. I want this work's readers' receptivity to grow more fertile, more embodied. Only Mr. Yasuhiko, I think, could have accomplished the task of reviving the Tale that is there in First Gundam. I think this because I sense a certain equipoise--in that Yoshikazu Yasuhiko, the author who seconded diverging with the masses and business, who abandoned the anime industry and, as solitary manga artist, gazed at and depicted the livelihood of individuals and state society historically, finally returns to Gundam after steering clear of it for over twenty years. And I sense a certain good grace. He decides to draw Gundam—well-known to the masses as a premier franchise of the plastic model and anime industries—not from weariness, not as expiation, nor to return to his roots, but in earnest, as a work of his own. That is why we are able to sense from the work a Tale that is both true and distinct from the first Gundam anime's. I think that's fantastic. I thank anew that I am able to read Mr. Yasuhiko's Gundam.

Finally, dear reader, holding this book, I urge you to pick up Mr. Yasuhiko's other works as well. I sincerely wish for you to know better what Tales are to you, to touch and feel them again. As for me, I'll do my best so that my next project will come across as a Tale.

Hideaki Anno, Gundam Fan April 10, 2005

Toshmichi Otsuki: NewType USA December 2006

- Excerpts from NewType USA, December 2006 issue
- Source http://forum.evageeks.org/viewtopic.php?t=2053

Anime's new baby

In the recent years, Hideaki Anno has been focusing more on live-action than anime, so his decision to make another Eva anime surprised many. Otsuki has a theory, though.

"Twelve years is enough time for you to be able to look back on earlier works obvjectively", he explains. "Shortly before we started this project, Anno had a big Eva marathon where he watched the whole series in one go. The first thing he said when he finished watching was, 'This show really is interesting, isn't it? I never realized how interesting it was'. That comment really shook me."

The new project was started as an affirmation of the value of Anno's past work. "He and his team have gained a lot of experience since then," Otsuki adds. "They've matured as animators and as people. I think you'll be able to see that growth in this production.

Despite all the changes in everyone's lives, having the old staff together again made for a very nostalgic mood on the production site. "Everyone was completely burned out during the second half of the original TV run and the movies, but now they're fresh and enthustiastic again. They've gotten older, but they're still full of energy. It's almost like watching kids prepare for a holiday celebration. The staff will also include a bunch of younger twenty-somethings who decided to join the anime industry after watching Eva and being inspired.

This show has been loved by a lot of people over the years." Indeed it has. The new movies also reflect the staff's feelings about the state of the anime industry. It's even suggested that this project is a rejection of current anime production philosophy.

"It's true that Eva was a huge hit," Otsuki says. "But its success spawned a great deal of confusion and misunderstanding in the in the industry, the end result being a bunch of mass-produced junk. That mindset has persisted for ten years, but now we're in a position to prove it wrong. We're determined to close the door on the post-Eva era for good.

Not your daddy's Eva

When the shocking news first broke, it sent anime fans around the world into a frenzy: Neon Genesis Evangelion, widely regarded as one of the best anime series ever made, was being adapted[into] four brand-new films! Who would've ever thought we'd see another Evangelion? In the dozen or so years since its debut, the series spawned numerous video games and even saw a "renewal" reissue with touched-up art and new voiceovers, but until now there hasn't been a smallest whisper of a new series. What can we possibly expect?

"The new story takes place in the same period as the 1995 TV series, but the plot is completely different," producer Toshimichi Otsuki elaborates. "This isn't a remake or a quick fix. It's a totally new production."

Being a new production means GAINAX is taking a different approach than what SUNRISE did with the recent Mobile Suit Zeta Gundam movies, which were essentially a three-part summary of the TV series. In contrast, the new Eva movies call for massive modifications to the setting and the concepts.

"It'll be something viewers can enjoy if they've never seen the TV series," Otsuki continues. "I want everyone--from hardcore fans of the original work to people who only know it because of the licensed stuff--to look at it as a standalone film series.

The complexity has been somewhat lessened to make it more accesible to newbies, but it'll still take a bit of thought to understand." Otsuki adds that they're removing much of the deliberate obfuscation that made Eva infamous: "Filling works with difficult words and concepts in order to create confusion among viewers was a good technique 12 years ago, but not anymore, and one of our primary goals for this project is to turn everyone's expectations upside down."

The core creative team from the TV series has reunited, with original director Hideaki Anno (Gunbuster) overseeing the production. Kazuya Tsurumaki (FLCL) is taking on the mechanical design. Anno himself came up with the storyline for the first installment, while fellow GAINAX co-founder Shinji Higuchi is responsible for storyboarding. A number of new staff members will also be brought on as the production advances.

Hideaki Anno: Statement about New Evangelion Movies

- Statement released on February 17th, 2007 at the Evangelion Movies website.
- Translation: Unknown
- Source: http://eva.yahoo.co.jp/gekijou/big_message.html

Many different desires are motivating us to create the new "Evangelion" film.

The desire to portray my sincere feelings on film.
The desire to share, with an audience, the embodiment of image, the diversity of expressions, and the detailed portrayal of emotions that animation offers.
The desire to connect today's exhausted Japanese animation [industry] to the future.
The desire to fight the continuing trend of stagnation in anime.
The desire to support the strength of heart that exists in the world.

Finally, the desire to have these wishes be realized.

For these purposes, we used the best methods available to us to make another Evangelion film.
Many times we wondered, "It's a title that's more than 10 years old. Why now?"
"Eva is too old", we felt.
However, over the past 12 years, there has been no anime newer than Eva.

Specifically, among the stagnant mood of the present day, it is the portrayal of will - not technology - that is most important.
To support the fans that support animation, we felt that a work that would appeal to middle and high school-aged men, who quickly grow away from Anime, was necessary.
When we decided that we wanted to something to support the anime [industry] of today, the determination to return to this title was strong.

As the creator of this project, [I assure you that] a very new-feeling Evangelion world has beeen constructed.
For this purpose, we are not returning to our roots at Gainax. I have set up a production company and studio, and it is in this new setting that we will start again.
Without looking back, without admiration for the circumstances, we aim to walk towards the future.
Thankfully, we have gathered staff from the old series, new staff, and many other fantastic staff to work on this series.
We realize that we are creating something that will be better than the last series.

"Eva" is a story that repeats.
It is a story where the main character witnesses many horrors with his own eyes, but still tries to stand up again.
It is a story of will; a story of moving forward, if only just a little.
It is a story of fear, where someone who must face indefinite solitude fears reaching out to others, but still wants to try.
We hope that you look forward to the 4 new retellings of this story.

In closing, it is also our job to provide a service to our customers.
Although it seems obvious, we aim to create a form of entertainment that anyone can look forward to; one that people who have never seen Evangelion can easily adjust to, one that can engage audiences as a movie for theatres, and one that produces a new understanding of the world.

This fall, we hope you can join us.

Creator/General Director, Anno Hideaki

Kazuya Tsurumaki: NewType USA, March 2007

- Exceprt from NewType USA, March 2007
- Source: http://forum.evageeks.org/viewtopic.php?t=2536

Recapturing the look and feel

Kazuya Tsurumaki, one of the directors for the new Evangelion films, has strong words for naysayers who dismiss the project as a mere remake. "Nothing could be further from the truth!", he says. "This isn't about putting the same old story with slightly better animation techniques or touched-up footage. When we use the word "rebuild", we mean an honest-to-goodness rebuild, from the ground up. It's a fact that there were things we wanted to do in the original TV series that just weren't feasible at the time, and one of our goals in doing this is to find a way to put some of the ideas back in. Operation Yashima is a perfect example. It's something we really wanted to do right this time, and getting the chance to do that was one of my main reasons for accepting the role of director. But rehashing past efforts isn't the whole story--not by a long shot. There are plenty of sides to this story which I want to bring out that are very different from what you saw in the TV version."

Tsurumaki goes on to explain that in the calculus of Eva-world, merely increasing the pixel count doesn't automatically translate into better production: "The Evangelion story is both simplistic and deep. The ideas are densely packed, like in a haiku. But that doesn't mean it needs to follow the Hollywood pattern of overproduction ad infinitum. We've all gotten used to that style of moviemaking, but if we're going to do Eva the way it should be done, then we need to return to the look and feel of the age. And I think we can do even more amazing things with that look and feel by incorporating modern-day animation technology."

While Tsurumaki freely admits that the first of the four film installments--slated to hit theaters in Japan sometime mid-2007--will run like a digest of the TV series, employing key scenes to bring viewers up to speed on the basic story and setting, no one is very willing to speculate on the content of the second, third, or final films.

"Frankly, it just got too chaotic," Tsurumaki comments on the brainstorming sessions that were initially meant to provide an overall plot outline and final resolution to the story. "We're all working from the assumption that we weren't able to reach our destination with the original TV series, but the exact nature of that "destination" is still unclear to everyone on the staff. Since we're going to all the trouble of making these new productions, we'd at least like to take the story as far as we took it back then, but it's been an uphill struggle so far. I get the feeling this project is going to be a very unstable project--in a lot of ways." Unstable, maybe. But brilliant, almost certainly. We're come to expect nothing less from Evangelion.

Yoshiyuki Sadamoto Answers All (Omake)

Q: How long have you been with GAINAX?
A: Over 20 years now!
Q: What was the biggest thing that happened to you while there?
A: Getting my manga published! It's still going strong...
Q: What's your favorite Anime quote?
A: In Honneamise, where Lieutenant Colonel Marty says he believes he's capable of existing only because the people around him need him to.
Q: What's the longest you ever stayed at the office without going home?
A: Three days!
Q: Fill in the blank: "GAINAX, ____ Forever!"
A: GAINAX, an otaku's friend forever! (OK, I know it's corny...)

Hideaki Anno Answers All (Omake)

Q: How long have you been with GAINAX?
A: I'm into my third decade now.
Q: What was the biggest thing that happened to you while there?
A: The company managing to stay together after the production of Honneamise. Also, resisting the urge to resign from my job even after the Aoki Uru project [a sequel to Honneamise, conceived in 1993] was put on indefinite hold.
Q: What's your favorite Anime quote?
A: Umm...
Q: What's the longest you ever stayed at the office without going home?

A: I dunno...A few years?

Q: Fill in the blank: "GAINAX, ____ Forever!"

A: GAINAX, there's no such thing as forever!

Hideaki Anno: "Let's Die Together", Atlantic Magazine, May 2007

- Excerpts from the article "Let's Die Together" from the Atlantic Magazine, May 2007
- Article by David Samuels
- Source http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2007/05/let-8217-s-die-together/5776/3/

“Rei is someone who is aware of the fact that even if she dies, there’ll be another to replace her, so she doesn’t value her life very highly,” Anno explains, slouching ever-deeper into the couch. “Her presence, her existence—ostensible existence—is ephemeral. She’s a very sad girl. She only has the barest minimum of what she needs to have. She’s damaged in some way; she hurts herself. She doesn’t need friends.”

Anno understands the Japanese national attraction to characters like Rei as the product of a stunted imaginative landscape born of Japan’s defeat in the Second World War. “Japan lost the war to the Americans,” he explains, seeming interested in his own words for the first time during our interview. “Since that time, the education we received is not one that creates adults. Even for us, people in their 40s, and for the generation older than me, in their 50s and 60s, there’s no reasonable model of what an adult should be like.” The theory that Japan’s defeat stripped the country of its independence and led to the creation of a nation of permanent children, weaklings forced to live under the protection of the American Big Daddy, is widely shared by artists and intellectuals in Japan. It is also a staple of popular cartoons, many of which feature a well-meaning government that turns out to be a facade concealing sinister and more powerful forces.

Anno pauses for a moment, and gives a dark-browed stare out the window. “I don’t see any adults here in Japan,” he says, with a shrug. “The fact that you see salarymen reading manga and pornography on the trains and being unafraid, unashamed or anything, is something you wouldn’t have seen 30 years ago, with people who grew up under a different system of government. They would have been far too embarrassed to open a book of cartoons or dirty pictures on a train. But that’s what we have now in Japan. We are a country of children.”

Ikuto Yamashita: NewType USA, September 2007

- Except from NewType USA, September 2007
- Source: http://forum.evageeks.org/viewtopic.php?t=9686

Ikuto Yamashita is the man responsible for taking the giant-robot concept and giving it a radical organic treatment in Evangelion. Now he's taking the opportunity of the new theatrical release to remake many of his core designs from the Eva series. Yamashita first heard news of the new movies from director Hideaki Anno, but at the time, he didn't realize what a monumental task was in front of him. "Anno only mentioned it very briefly in passing, at the very end of a presentation about a bunch of new projects.", he says. "I'd already heard that we were going to be collecting material from the TV series to reuse in a movie, so the announcement didn't surprise me much at all. The real shock came later, once I was already wrapped up in the production."

Yep, you guessed it--Yamashita was asked to completely rework many of the key designs from the show. "But it's probably more accurate to say that we returned to our original designs.", he adds. "Back when we were doing the TV series, the production was so tight that we had to drop all the fine details that might cause animation errors or delays. This time, the director's letting us do it the right way from the beginning."

As you may have guessed, Yamashita's influence is all over the look of the new movie, from the color schemes of the Eva units to their new weapon configurations--even the new NERV logo. In fact, the entire Eva arsenal (including the Positron Rifle, Progressive Knife and Shield) has been completely redesigned.

"When we were doing the TV series, the director was really into the idea of the Eva equipment being actual real-life weapons, scaled up to Eva-size," Yamashita notes. "This time he's basically saying 'Just make it different from what we used before,' so that's what I'm doing with my redesign."What excited Yamashita the most about working on the Rebuild of Evangelion? "How it's crammed with so many new ideas!" he sounded half-exhausted, but there was plenty of pride in his voice--we can't wait to see his work for ourselves.

Megumi Hayashibra: NewType USA, October 2007

- Excerpt from NewType USA, October 2007
- Source: http://forum.evageeks.org/viewtopic.php?t=9686

Sometime in April, at a certain studio and without any particular fanfare, recording quietly began on it. You know--the new Evangelion movie. Honestly, I was pretty worried about it--after all, I'd parted ways with Rei Ayanami ten years ago--so in order to find the character again, I hauled out my old videos and immediately started turning the lines over and over in my head. There were famous ones from the show, of course, but there was also the flood of random game and figurine-related voice work that came afterward--I remember trying to do every line as seriously as I could, even if I didn't think it was the kind of thing that Rei would say. Revisiting the old stuff wore me out, and when I went to the first recording session for the new movie, I wasn't particularly looking forward to it. The feeling nagged at me until I walked into the studio, said, "Good morning" and saw the old, familiar cast again. It took me right back to 1995.

Rei's first appearance is when she comes out on a stretcher, all bandaged up. As soon I performed the first groan for that scene, the Rei that had been sleeping within me all along came rushing to the surface, and before I knew it, I was 100 percent her. "Yes, this is where Rei and I started," I thought. It was like once I heard Shinji's and Gendo's voices, all my misgivings vanished. Such is the power of the recording booth! Anno himself was directing, and we rolled right through scene after scene. (Okay, so we did at least five takes for each. We wanted to be sure we weren't compromising on quality.) A whole bunch of scenes from the TV series and original movies had been rewritten and reanimated, and the lines were subtly different, too. But in the midst of all that change, one thing's for sure: The Rei I know is and love is definitely back.

Megumi Ogata: How is the Shinji who appeared in Shinkalion different from Evangelion's Shinji Ikari? (2018)

- Date: September 15, 2018
- Translator: unknown/anonymous
- Source: https://dime.jp/genre/588633/

What were your thoughts when you heard that Shinji would be appearing in today's episode?

Ogata: I've done numerous game collabs in the past, so I thought it's finally time for an Anime collab. As information started to pour in about it I hadn't received the offer (to voice him) yet, so I thought it might have been given to someone else. However I'm glad it ended up being me, I thought "Now I can ride the 500 Type Eva!" (lol).

Tell us your thoughts when you saw the 500 Type Eva transform into the Shinkalion?

Ogata: I was surprised at how robot-ish it was. For those who aren't very familiar with Eva, it isn't exactly categorized as your typical "Robot Anime". So I guess it's what you would call a Robot Anime version of the Eva! (lol). It looked really cool and very different from our show's Eva.

What were some of the highlights of your collaboration of today's episode?

Ogata: The Shinji depicted in the script had a real big-brother feeling to him that he usually doesn't have. Even when I tried to give him a slightly more mature voice, I was still told by sound director Mida-san, "Make him sound more level-headed so he seems more reliable than Hayato" and "Make his voice less shaky".

I wanted to retort, "But he's not a level-headed character...!", but in the end I tried my best to fulfill their request in making him match the show's atmosphere.

Does Ogata-san's have any treasured memories about Shinkansen?

Ogata: When I was a child, I was the type that liked railroads more than dolls. I loved to run alongside the Shinkansen rail while singing songs. So I was super thrilled when I got to ride the 500 Type Eva!

Shinkalion and Evangelion's collaboration airs on August 11th, anything you're looking forward to in the future?

Ogata: If possible, in the next EvaShinkalion collab - I'd like to try fighting an angel- er, or a normal enemy!

Reasonably reliable sources with limited availability

Production staff on Eva (Animate NEWS69 11/1995)

- Translation Riki
- Source: http://anime-room.jp/modules/evangelion/eva-doc/evain1.htm

It's 2015. The Angel attacks! What can we do ?!

The production group GAINAX, which produced "Nadia, The Secret of the Mysterious Sea", has started a TV anime for the first time in four and a half years.

"Neon Genesis Evangelion" is a genuine SF robot action series set in the near future.

As those who have seen episodes 1 to 4 may know, the worldview and the eyes of the robot "Eva" and the enemy "Angel" have been realistically drawn from the point of view of the 14-year-old main character Shinji.

The psychological descriptions is detailed and life-sized, and from the very beginning, we are confronted with a difficult proposition: "What if we were told to fight the 'Angel' tomorrow?

While enjoying the powerful robot action, it is tempting to think about what to do in order to carve out your own destiny.

Interview: GAINAX Production Staff

"Enjoy the battle with the Angels, who come in different shapes and abilities each time!"

The main character Shinji Ikari can be considered a life-size hero for the average junior high school student in 2015, that is to say, for those who watch the anime?

I'm not sure if "life-size hero" is the right description, but I set up Shinji as a 14-year-old boy living in the present.

What did you find particularly difficult to describe about Shinji's psychology and facial expressions?

I'm still struggling with this, so I can't answer your question. I'm sorry.

What are some of the main character portrayals that will be interesting to watch?

The three pilots (Shinji, Rei and Asuka) have different approaches to Evangelion.

How will they relate to the other characters? Check out the "adult" part of Nerv(Misato, Ritsuko, etc.) and Gendou Ikari's words and actions (lol).

It will be interesting to see how Shinji and his friends who are 14 years old, Misato and her friends who are almost 30 years old, and Gendou and his friends who are in their 40s and 50s feel and act differently in each generation.

From what episode will Asuka Langley, the Soryu in "Eva" Unit 2, appear? What kind of girl is Asuka?

Asuka appears in episode 8. She is a dynamic character who is a counterpart to the other heroine, Rei Ayanami. She's in contrast to Rei in everything (even in terms of living).

The robots and mecha in general, such as "Angel" and "Eva", are drawn very realistically. What do you pay most attention to in your work?

Not only paying a good deal of attention to draw the celluloid image accurately, but we're also trying to create the scene in a way that included cooperation with the art staff, camera angles, light sources, and other factors to create the scene in a way that says, "This is what it would look like if a person were in that spot".

I make sure that the scenes do not lose touch with the depiction of daily life and the battle scenes.

By the time readers read this interview, the story will have progressed to episode 5. What are the highlights of episode 5 and 5+?

In the first episode, the storyline gets into the main plot without any explanation of the world because we wanted the audience to feel the same way as Shinji, the main character, and watch the story in real time.

By episode 4, the worldview is gradually revealed from Shinji's point of view, and then from episode 5 onwards, we move into episodes that introduce the society (Nerv) and other characters in the world around him.

Please look forward to the battles against the "Angels" that attack with different shapes and abilities each episode.

Also, don't miss to see how Asuka and Kaji will interact with the other characters from episode 8!

Interview with Hideaki Anno and Kihachi Okamoto (Writer/Director)

- (Circa 1996)
- Kahachi Okamoto's IMDB page
- Source: 『写真(えいが)』の話に来ました
- Translation/Summary by symbv (Incomplete)

Note: this is the same interview as "Hideaki Anno: Valuable conversation between director Hideaki Anno and Kihachi Okamoto (Animage 01/1997)

Okamoto said that he watched Evangelion twice though he watched the ending first. He said the reference material he received along with the video has "controversial" written in it. He did not understand at first but later knew why once he watched the whole series.

Okamoto - Gun Busters is easier to understand. The final episode in the second video is black-and-white. I think it might be done to make it stand out - I mean the "Okarinasai" at the end.
Anno - My generation was the age when black and white moved to color. I would like people living now to see how great to have color lol. That was 35 monochrome.
Okamoto - I love black and white. Perhaps nearly half of my works are black and white?
Anno - Recently there are more black and white CM on TV. Poster too. Somehow it is getting popular.
Okamoto - And then there is partial coloring.
Anno - "Part Color"... Everyone is now so familiar with beautiful full color, so on the contrary they see that as ununsual.
Okamoto - But development cost is high. In the past development solution for black-and-white was always available. Now you need to order it first and then they make the development solution.
Anno - If it's color development can be done in the same day. For black and white, they told me to give them 2 days and it became a problem to me schedule-wise. If there is a rush, they would not get it done unless they have 2 days.
Okamoto - But that thing does not fade. Print is easy to fade as time passes by.
Anno - It becomes reddish...

Then some talk about Okamoto's Nikudan. Anno watched it twice and Okamoto said it's more than enough...Anno said he still remembered a lot of the scenes and how they are edited and linked.

But the ones he watched most are "The longest day of Japan" and "Okinawa Battle". He even played it as BGV when he was doing storyboarding at one time, and then slowly his attention was drawn to the video and ended up spending 3 hours watching it.

Then Okamoto talked about his filming Okinawa Battle in Okinawa and the problem with lack of manpower and resource, ended up doing one of the characters.

Then Anno said it's easier in anime -- if one more character is needed just draw him. But Anno said anime and real life both have aspects that the other side may envy. For example in anime, the camera does not move, and the shadow and body motion needs to be made realistic. Even with CG it has become easier, it still has that CG feel. Anno then said for anime the main work is still about fixing the motion. Scrolling and wrapping the background is particularly inefficient. Then more flattery from Anno about how Okamoto's tempo and scene cutting is suitable for anime. And then Anno talked about frame aspect ratio -- love Cinescope and miss its disappearance. Hate standard ratio and also not like Vista. He loves the way when Cinescope aspect is used audience have to follow the scene by moving their heads which is something not possible with TV watching.

Skipped the part that talks about "Blood and Sand" and "Sengoku yarou", and use of long shots. Except that Anno mentioned the fun thing with anime is that the photographer doubles as the actor in anime and in real-life you never see cameraman doubles as actor.

Very technical talk about how many frames of films to use for one blink. Anno said 6-7 frames, if he does not want the scene to get noticed, he put 6, if he wants to make sure it gets noticed he put at least 9 frames. And he said that if it is familar and static scene, even 2 frames can leave an impression. 3 frames may already make it too slow. But if it is fighting it needs 7-8 frames. Took 12 frames in film, cut may be 5-6, depending on how the pictures look. And of course in dialogue how to cut is already predetermined. He said he spent 12 hours to cut 20 min of animation. The longest time took him 24 hours.

Skipped the part about talking with the audience.

About line of eye sight:
Anno - In the case of anime, the acting and performance usually does not take that much into account. One reason could be the character design. The eyes of the characters usually stress on the details of the eyes and this make it difficult to put acting by using line of sight. However, in Eva the char design is comparatively easier to do such acting, so I put some effort into that. Like where the character is looking at in that scene, or whether the audience are going to see the eyes or not...
Because it is so fundamental I took great care about it. So unusually I put instructions in the storyboard like "Eyes are looking here". As I am influenced by director Okamoto, I used camera line of sight more than usual
Okamoto - if possible, line of sight should be on somewhere close. And on direction, A would look at B and then speak, and B would look back at A in reaction. It has to be like that...
Anno - for me, camera line of sight is often on the front. The drawing staff usually hates it. Drawing frontal face is more diffcult and often it could not be done well. But if the line of sight goes the other way, it becomes hard to use it to act.
Okamoto - There is power if the guy's sight is close to you
Anno - yes, that's it. That has energy in it.
Anno - I don't like switching between front and side. It is easier to frame the position of eyes of the characters if it is a front to front exchanges between the lines of sights of two persons. Anime is at the end a 2D thing so the amount of information is limited. When it is cut to a new scene, the audience will try to search for something to focus, and if it is a face, it will be the eyes they look first. So when the eyes have expressed the information, you can cut to another scene already. In tv anime, static scenes are many. I think this is the proper way to go. Although I think acting by eyes is very important it is also very tedious. I don't mind putting effort into doing it but somehow when I look at it later I have a feeling that it won't get noticed, or nobody cares. And then I get a bit irritated.
Okamoto - Perhaps because eyes in anime characters are so big...
Anno - That has many physical reasons. If we do not make the eyes big and treat it as a symbol for the characters, it will become difficult for many to draw.
Okamoto - but one can act just by eyes. Like the position of the iris...
Anno - true, but as the end we only have the drawings to fall back on. If we overdo that kind of serious acting, it carries a risk of looking ridiculous. Character Design is a difficult thing.

About Director:
Skipped the part about old time directors and struggles with studio about rights to edit, except Anno said that for anime sometimes it needs to do editing without having all drawings. But he thinks editing is fun. Gather extra cuts and then try to experiment by switching the cuts or rearranging order and that is interesting. And even the question of whether to cut 2 frames or not can make a difference.

About Storyboarding:
More flattery from Anno about watching "Ghost Train" and Okamoto said because of AD'S mistake he once needed to take 140-150 cuts in one day.
Anno - for movies, consensus is impossible
Okamoto - Director must be a dictator
Anno - He is a despot. Nothing can move forward if we have to wait until someone else makes a decision and approves. Also the personal character would not come out. In anime, a overall design called storyboard is made from the very beginning. And the production system is based on that design, so it is easier to unify opinions.

On the other hand, there is an image that the director's job is over once the storyboard is decided.
Okamoto - since we are on it, in Gunbuster and Eva last episode, there are parts in black and white, that flashback, that kind of stood out. It used quite a bit of sketch like drawings. Did the storyboard also cover that?
Anno - It was put in there.
Okamoto - Oh, those sketches were interesting. It somehow feels it's moving.

Anime vs real-life film:
Okamoto said real-life is not necessarily better. Anno said many anime directors want to do real-life. Many simply put drawings in place of real-life images and they seem to want to push anime to look closer to real life film. And both think it is not a good idea.

Final comment by Anno - Animation is a kind of static world, but there is a yearn for thrill when it switches from one static world to antoher static world and that cut to new scene is a most efficient way to get such thrill. And he thinks Okamoto's style of film cutting has similar effect
Anno - in a tv anime, 30 min of video has a limit of 3500 pictures. So the images cannot move as much as I want. And how to squeeze out the best from the image in such lack of motion, it is all in the cutting.

The World of Hideaki Anno (11/1996)

- Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lifMqJb80fc
- Translation: Riki

This is a rough transcript of an interview with Hideaki Anno, which aired in November 1996. The interviewer is a famous Japanese voice actress Noriko Hidaka.

The World of Hideaki Anno

~ A collection of treasured images ~

Good evening, I'm Noriko Hidaka(*1).

- 1) A Japanese actress, voice actress, singer and narrator. She played Minami Asakura in Touch, Akane Tendo in Ranma ½, Satsuki Kusakabe in My Neighbor Totoro, Near in Death Note, Seta Sōjirō in Rurouni Kenshin, Jean Roque Raltique in Nadia: The Secret of Blue Water and Kikyo in Inuyasha. (Wikipedia)

Today I would like to introduce you to an old friend of mine. The friend is now incredibly popular among young people, especially middle and high school students.

His name is Hideaki Anno. He is a director of animation.

Hideaki Anno is the director of the much-talked-about anime, Neon Genesis Evangelion. Three boys and girls who control the fictional cyborg in the near future when they have a global cataclysm known as the Second Impact, and they grow up while fighting against mysterious giant objects, Angels, that attack them.

Awakening to the visual arts

Hidaka: You've become a big shot, haven't you?

Anno: A big shot ? Me?

H: Why are you laughing?

A: I don't really feel like I'm a big shot.

H: I think you are amazing. Outside of the anime scene, I've also seen “Hideaki Anno! Very popular with young people now!”, something like that.

A: Doesn't ring a bell.

H: Oh yeah? But you feel you're getting more attention than before.

A: Are they paying attention? ...I think you’re right, but it really doesn't ring a bell.

H: I see.

When did you first become interested in movies in the first place?

A: Well, ever since I was a kid, I've only watched TV, not movies. I watched a lot of TV as a kid.

H: Was it mainly anime or special effects?

A: I also watched other TV dramas. I had grown up as a normal kid. I was so into special effects and super hero works, but I never thought of making them.

H: Super hero ones?

A: Yeah. But by the time I was in high school, I started to feel like shooting on 8mm film.

H: The live-action kind?

A: Yeah. Both anime and live-action.

H: Suddenly?

A: Suddenly.

H: Inspired by someone?

A: No, I've always wanted to make my own. I had such a desire, so I did some filming. I think copycat is what got me into the video industry in the first place. Probably.

H: In the beginning, when you made moving pictures, did you write a flip book or something like that by yourself?

A: Yes, I did. The Japanese textbook was the best. The social studies textbook was thick, but it usually had pictures of great people at the edges of the book.

H: Yes, there are.

A: That was a problem for me.

H: I see.

A: The Japanese textbook doesn't have that. So it was easy to make.

He who shoots often, hits at last

H: Is your first film "He who shoots often, hits at last."

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GPrh8lD2z3E&t=0s

A: There was another film I shot in high school before that one, but I don't know where the film is now.

H: Did you shoot that film when you were studying for your college entrance exam?

A: Yes, that's when. Actually, I should have been studying, but I was doing all those things.

H: You must have enjoyed it a lot.

A: More than studying, yes. Studying is boring. Some of them were interesting, but most of them were just boring.

H: I was surprised to watch “He who shoots often, hits at last.”. It was so nostalgic. I feel like I used to watch something like this as a kid.

A: We did have ones.

H: What are you drawing on?

A: That's Daiei's notepad.

H: What? Daiei's notepad? The Daiei supermarket?

A: Yes, that Daiei.

H: That note pad!

Did you take those pictures one by one?

A: Yes, I did.

H: Wow.

A: I didn't know about professional timesheets or anything like that yet. I did it based on intuition, It was called Straight ahead animation.

There was an independent production group, and I was a member of the group. We all film our individual creations together.

H: When you watch that video, you'll see the name Anno, the director. I noticed that design hasn't changed at all, has it?

A: It hasn't changed at all since I was in junior high school.

H: It goes, "ANN".

A: When I was in junior high school, I was in the art club and drew pictures. Oil paintings require a signature, which was a cool thing to do at the time. I still use my signature from that time.

Durable tires This is a project he did in his first year of college.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ZL_WVVGbvM&t=0s

H: Well, I know "Working Car" is a children's song, so what was the title again?

A: Durable tires.

H: Oh, yes, "Durable tires". It's totally different, sorry.

A: Totally different. Lol.

H: The car is moving a lot. Extremely a lot. The car was transforming and moving so well,

I thought you must have had a hard time to make it. I watched it one more time.

The movements were so smooth, it was like watching foreign cartoons when I was a kid.

A: In technical terms, it's all one frame animations, so it's probably smooth.

H: One frame animation is smooth?

A: Yes, it is.

H: Why?

A: Why? You have 24 films, right? Out of 24 films, all 24 are moving. In a normal animation, 8 frames are moving out of 24. 8 x 3 is 24, so it's a 3-frame animation.

H: So you're moving it frame by frame?

A: Right. It moves at three times the speed of a normal TV. It's a little weird that it's triple speed, though.

H: That's pretty skilled technique for a college student, isn't it?

A: I guess so. I didn't think so at the time though.

H: What was your evaluation at a class?

A: I got an A for that one.

H: Did you make that all by yourself?

A: Yes, I made it alone.

H: I thought to myself, "Wow, there was a time when he was making this kind of stuff.".

A: Oh yea?

H: I was really amazed.

A: It was normal for us to do independent work like that.

Aikoku Sentai Dai Nippon Anno, who is fascinated by superheroes, was not only involved in animation, but also participated as a staff member in special effects projects made by his friends when he was in college. One of them was Aikoku Sentai Dai Nippon.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6d8romXBRTg

H: Away from anime, I'm talking about this special effects thing, what was the title again? ...Aikoku Sentai Dai Nippon. That reminded me of "Battle Fever J".

A: Because both of them are classic superhero things.

H: How were you involved in that work?

A: I just helped them.

H: Helping? I heard you did the mechanical design, correct?

A: I did the design, optical compositing, drawing, and other aspects of animation. I also acted in a costume.

H: You were in one?

A: Yes, I was.

H: What color superhero were you?

A: No, not that one. I was in the robots and monsters.

H: Also, didn't you do some narration?

A: Oh, I also do narration.

H: That narration was very good, wasn't it?

A: In a manner of speaking, I did as Tōru Ōhira(*2) did. I exaggerated.

- 2) One of his best-known roles was the dub voice of Darth Vader in Star Wars, on the series' home video releases and playing the title character Moguro Fukuzō in the original The Laughing Salesman. He was also known for his many narration roles, most notably in the Super Sentai series.

H: Each machine combines to form a robot in this film, right? I wonder what you're making that out of?

A: It's Paper.

H: Paper? What are you using to attach it?

A: Bond, for example. It's just a paper craft, you know.

'*The returning Ultraman* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kJZBt6wTNe0

H: The returning Ultraman in which you played the leading role. When I saw the movie before, I had heard in advance that Anno was Ultraman. But I wondered how he could look exactly like Ultraman with Hideaki Anno's usual face.

There are things you can do only when you're wearing a mask, right?

A: Right.

H: For example, you're wearing sunglasses right now, but there are things you can do because you're wearing sunglasses.

A: Yeah.

H: But in the film, you wore the same glasses you always wore, not sunglasses, and acted as Ultraman with them. I think that's amazing. You are kind of shy, aren't you?

A: I'm absolutely shy.

H: However, you sometimes take unbelievable and courageous actions.

A: You could say it's just foolish.

H: Oh it's definitely not.

A: That would be easier if I didn't have to think about anything.

H: Were you also fascinated by Ultraman as a kid?

A: Yes, I was.

H: For the Ultraman pose, did you watch the video and practice it?

A: No, I used to play as Ultraman when I was a kid, so my body remembered.

H: Do you still remember it?

A: I remember some.

H: Can you do it here?

A: No, I can't.

H: Why not?

A: Because it's embarrassing.

H: Just for a little bit, please. Just once!

A: Nope.

H: How about just a specium beam?

A: No.

H: Why don't you like it?

A: It's embarrassing.

H: Oh, I don't like it when people behave like that after they become masters.

A: I don't want to be a comedy.

H: You have such a good character, did you know?

A: I can't. I don't want to do comedy.

The Japan Science Fiction Convention The Japan Science Fiction Convention has been held annually by fans from 1962 to the present(1996). This is the opening animation of the Japan Science Fiction Convention, which Anno was involved in when he was an amateur.

H: I wonder if you were already working professionally back then?

A: I helped with a TV animation called "Macross" once. Then, when I did DAICON3, I was offered to help with the work.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CQjruwkyOaU

H: Isn't that a scout?

A: I guess you could say so.

H: You were in college at the time.

A: Yes. That's how my career started.

H: "Hey, you're good. Are you interested in being an idol?"

A: In Harajuku? Lol.

H: In the case of idols, that's true. It's like you walking in Harajuku and someone says, "You look nice.".

A: Exactly. Lol.

H: "I saw your film. I like it. Do you want to come to Tokyo?"

H: Is it like you became a professional from an amateur and have reached this career pretty smoothly?

A: Smoothly...I rather let it happen. There are times when I get frustrated and think about quitting, though. But from others, it looks like my career is certainly going well.

Royal Space Force: The Wings of Honnêamise Royal Space Force: The Wings of Honnêamise was the first theatrical film produced by the production group Gainax, to which Anno belongs. He was the animation director for this film. In the rocket launch scene, he says that all the falling pieces of ice were drawn by hand.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S-opl3GWB58

H: Were you involved in this film as an animator?

A: Yes. That was my best time as an animator. It sure was.

H: Looking back, do you think you were doing a good job in that anime?

A: I do. Even at the time, it was a job that I was quite satisfied with.

Gunbuster https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLr3b2bDBZg

H: What was your next project?

A: Next up is Gunbuster.

H: There were a lot of scenes where you shouted out the names of the moves, weren't there?

A: Yes, yes.

H: At that time, we ended up staying behind for the last recording session, and the lines were passed down verbally from you.

A: That's a nice way of putting it, though, yes.

H: You didn't explain it like "shorten here and stretch there," but demonstrated it out loud from the bottom of your stomach, so you must have been shouting in the studio while getting dizzy.

A: Yeah.

H: At that time, Gunbuster was quite a tough job, and I was also at the end of two shoots, so I was a bit dizzy myself. You shouted, "Buster Beam," and then you said, breathing on your shoulder, "Go ahead.". I was overwhelmed by your power. Then I shouted, "Buster Beam," and asked you, "Is this okay?".

Nadia: The Secret of Blue Water

For the next film, "Nadia: The Secret of Blue Water," Anno also cast Noriko Hidaka. This film was so popular that it later became a feature film. It is one of the works that both of them will never forget.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wqkD5ViKlOY

H: When I didn't understand something, you often called me silly.

A: Oh did I?

H: Yeah you did.

A: Oh I didn't say you were silly, but I said you were not smart.

H: Oh yea, you did.

A: That's when you couldn't read kanji, dude.

H: Don't call me dude.

H: You're currently working on a theatrical production called Evangelion but,

A: It's a tough job.

H: Right. I feel if I ask you to talk about the future in the middle of something like that, you'll probably say that you are not thinking about anything about the future.

"I want to do fiction." A: Actually I'm starting to see some direction. I found the words for it the other day. I don't want to do illusions, I want to do fiction.

H: Fiction?

A: Yes, Fiction. It's not an illusion anymore. I wanted to talk about reality, not dreams, and that's where I ended up. Animation is very useful for expressing dreams, isn't it? That's because a picture itself is already an illusion. Trying to make something real out of it is very difficult, but it's interesting to see how you're trying to make something real out of a painting. It's not that you're trying to make it look like a real action, but it's about the concept of the world, the characters, and so on. I thought, "Why am I trying so hard to take it in that direction?". This is because I want to do fiction.

・・・

At first glance, he seems strong and unsociable, but inside he is quite funny and shy. The energy behind his elusive vibe is immeasurable. I thought I knew a lot about him, but maybe I really didn't know anything. I wonder what he will do in the coming year.

Hideaki Anno, occupation, according to him, "I'm a producer and an animation director.". He's an old friend of mine.

Hideaki Anno's Roundtable Discussion

Excerpts from a roundtable disccussion with Hideaki Anno at the Anime Expo '96 convention. From Animerica vol.4, no.9. Source: http://masterwork.animemedia.com/Evangelion/anno.html

On the unique appearance of the Evangelion Units...

ANNO: There is a monster in Japan called the oni, which has two horns sticking out of its head, and the overall image of the EVA is based on that. I wanted also to have an image that beneath the image of that robot monster is a human. It's not really a robot, but a giant human, so it's different from other robot mecha such as those in Gundam.

On Gunbuster's alternate future -- is it dominated by Russia?

ANNO: There's a Japanese Empire. In the year 2000, the U.S. and Japan had a war, and Japan occupied Hawaii. Sorry.

On the decision to have the final episode of Gunbuster in black-and-white...

ANNO: When you have color, you have an extra dimension of information. Color would have gotten in the way of the sense of scale we wanted to portray with the black hole bomb. Also -- no one had ever done it before.

On the date 2015 which figures in both Gunbuster and Evangelion...

ANNO: The date is from an old show I liked as a kid, and it was also the year in which Tetsuwan Atom took place.

On his favorite American animation...

ANNO: Tex Avery, Tom and Jerry. I don't like Disney.

On anime creators who inspired him...

ANNO: Outside of my staff, Mr. Yoshiyuki Tomino. Tomino's Mobile Suit Gundam and Space Runaway Ideon are my favorite anime besides Yamato. Hayao Miyazaki, with whom I worked on Nausicaa, animating the scene where the God-Soldier fires, was also a mentor to me.

On computer games...

ANNO: I myself have no interest in them; however, I am interested in computer graphics for animation.

On how the protagonist of Evangelion reflects Anno himself...

ANNO: Shinji does reflect my character, both in conscious and unconscious part. In the process of making Evangelion, I found out what kind of person I am. I acknowledged that I'm a fool.

On his religious beliefs...

ANNO: I don't belong to any kind of organized religion, so I guess I could be considered agnostic. Japanese spiritualism holds that there is kami (spirit) in everything, and that's closer to my own beliefs.

On whether he is a vegetarian like Nadia and Rei ...

ANNO: I like tofu. I just don't want to eat meat or fish. It's not for religious reasons.

On expressing himself through animation...

ANNO: Animation makes sense to people in the process of their seeing it. So when people get confused by my themes, or cannot get the overall message, the connection is not really going through, because it didn't satisfy that person. So there would be less meaning for that individual. There has to be a relationship that comes into being between the person watching and what the character's saying in the animation itself.

On what he thought of Patlabor 2 and Ghost in the Shell...

ANNO: I haven't seen Ghost yet, but I think that Patlabor is really good. I liked the scenes better in the second film.

On Evangelion's success...

ANNO: As for all the merchandising, it's just a matter of economics. It's strange that Evangelion has been a hit. Everyone in it is sick!

On his next project...

ANNO: Another TV show, probably some kind of space adventure.

On The Wings of Honneamise...

ANNO: The director of Honneamise, Hiroyuki Yamaga, is pretty serious as a matter of character, certainly -- so he doesn't really think of compromising with the audiences. Therefore it wasn't a radical film from Yamaga's perspective. There's something like a sequel planned, but it's been stopped for now. Yamaga wants to make it 'the final anime of this century'. He wants to make it happen.

On the future of the anime industry...

ANNO: The creators have to change their frame of mind for the field to advance. And it doesn't look too hopeful in today's Japan. It's in a critical condition right now. I don't think there's any bright future. That's because the people who are producing it are not doing well. But there's also problems in the people who are watching it. The people who make it, and the people who want it, they're always wanting the same things. They've been making only similar things for the past ten years, with no sense of urgency. To get it going once more, you need to force people to go outside, to go out again.

On recent attempts to adapt anime from novels...

ANNO: There are many novels written today which are made with the intention that they will be animated -- so it's not that big a step. I think that Legend of the Galactic Heroes was well done, but then, it was that kind of a novel.

On his feelings about the current trend toward Japanese historical content in manga and anime...

ANNO: I have no interest in it; they are searching for a theme.

On his hobbies and interests...

ANNO: My hobby is scuba diving, and besides science fiction, I like to read romance novels written by women. Since I'm a male, I don't really know the emotions of women. And because I want to understand their feelings, and create more realistic female characters, this is something I have to pursue.

To an American fan who boasted of having spent all his schoolbook money on anime goods...

ANNO: You're a fool. Study harder. If I could go back in time and tell my college-age self something, I would tell him to study harder, too.

On where he would like to travel...

ANNO: I want to see the universe, outer space -- it's one of the places I want to go while I'm still living. When I was a child... I thought that it would be possible to go out into space when I grew up. And that's not possible now. But I'd like to go to the moon, or ride on the space shuttle.

On getting into the anime industry...

ANNO: If you want to get into anime, my best advice to you as a creator is to please have diverse interests in things besides animation. Look outward, first of all. Most anime makers are basically autistic. They have to try and reach out, and truly communicate with others. I would guess that the greatest thing anime has ever achieved is the fact that we're holding a dialogue right here and now.

On his favorite Evangelion character...

ANNO: Asuka , because she's cute.

When told that the American audience favors Misato ...

ANNO: I'm surprised. In Japan, the overwhelming favorite is Rei . They can't handle strong women such as Misato and Asuka .

On Evangelion's last two episodes , which upset many fans...

ANNO: I have no problem with them. If there's a problem, it's all with you guys. Too bad.

Toshio Okada: Return of the Otaking

- Excepts from "Return of the Otaking", Toshio Okada at Anime America 1996
- Copyright 1996, Viz
- Source: http://www.j-pop.com/anime/archive/feature/04_gal_999/otaking.html

Anime America 1996 was a voice actor's convention, illustrating that such a phenomenon is growing in the United States. Toby Proctor ('Tuxedo Mask,' Sailor Moon) drew crowds, as did Viz's own Matt Hill ('Laocorn,' Fatal Fury), Jason Gray-Stanford ('Godai,' Maison Ikkoku), Paul Dobson ('Happosai,' Ranma 1/2), Janyse Jaud ('Akemi,' Maison Ikkoku),and Cathy Weseluck ('Shampoo,' Ranma 1/2). Of Japanese guests, there was but one--a man not famous as an actor, animator, character designer, or director.Yet the significance of Toshio Okada, the founder and ex-president of Studio Gainax, was well-known to many attendees.

The story of how Okada and a group of fans with 8mm cameras founded Gainax, the 'super-otaku' anime studio, has passed into legend through Otaku no Video, the self-parody and study of fandom. Okada himself (who appears loosely disguised in the film) is known as the super-otaku, the Otaking, alternately out of ridicule and respect. During Okada's time, Gainax's features ranged from the girls-and-mecha OAVs Top o Nerae! (Gunbuster), to the Miyazaki-esque adventure Nadia, to the visionary alternate civilization depicted in Wings of Honneamise. In 1992 Okada left the company, which has since produced Neon Genesis Evangelion and an increasing number of CD-ROM games such as the Princess Maker series. He is now a university lecturer--even though he himself entered college only to join a science fiction club, dropping out after he did.

In two separate sessions Okada, whose frankness and humor stand out among people associated with the industry, spoke to fans and press. In English, and occasionally in Japanese with translation, he answered questions from anime fans who remembered the days of the late '80s when Gainax was the studio every garage animator aspired to be -- and from fans for whom A.D. Vision's Evangelion release will be their first look at the studio Okada began. Fandom has changed a lot since he, dressed in a Char Aznable suit, first sold fanzines at Daicon...but, conversational with strange questions and accessible with unexpected answers, Okada still knows just what it's changed to.

Friday

The Toshio Okada panel took place as a large public forum in the main upstairs ballroom of Anime America. About 80 people were present to hear and talk to Okada.

PANEL: So, uh, sir, um, what--what's going on now? As a producer, as a president--former president, excuse me--what progress have you made as a creative force?

OKADA: Well, basically, I started off as an otaku, and I jumped from being an amateur to a pro--I'm really not sure when that happened; it was sort of in the early '80s, or perhaps 1984 or 1985. In 1981 I made the "Daicon III Opening Animation"--that was only an 8mm, five-minute film. In 1983 I made the "Daicon IV Opening Animation;" that was also an 8mm, five-minute film. And after that, my staff wanted to become professionals, because all of that had cost me, they were all volunteers, and we had already spent much money and much time...So, and then, we had already quit our universities and colleges, or most of us had lost our jobs, so we must make money doing something, so we went to Tokyo and became professional film-makers.

PANEL: My personal favorite of all your work is OTAKU NO VIDEO, just because it's a very universal story, with situations I think many people can relate to if they're fans of something, the culture is very universal--Did you see yourself investing a lot of emotion into making OTAKU NO VIDEO as a fun thing, as your experience, as the experiences of your friends?

OKADA: I had a lot of fun making making GUNBUSTER, but I didn't have that burning sensation when I made OTAKU NO VIDEO. It was something that I lightly made. I made it that way because I thought the people who watched it were like the people in the live-action portion--not the people who made it. 1983 was the turning point for myself and my friends. Basically what I wanted to do was set the stage for 1983 because that was when everything was changing; I wanted to show people what it was like during that period back in 1983, how we lived, basically, what our life was as otaku. [TO AUDIENCE MEMBER] You're hiding your finger with the flash, so you probably didn't get a picture.

AUDIENCE: Arigato.

PANEL: I'd like one more question, and then I'm going to open it up to everybody: There are many themes...I go back to OTAKU NO VIDEO--you talk a lot about, and it seems like you predicted in that film, a lot of the commercialization and product management that is now very, very common in the animation industry. Do you feel more strongly now about the way things have to be processed, and managed, and shoved out the door--you see all around you the selling of creativity?

OKADA: That world we made in OTAKU NO VIDEO, it was not a prediction: it was an otaku's dream. Maybe we can be more major, or a bigger group, or maybe we can make our own theme parks! But in these days, I can't believe all of the things that are happening--our otaku's dreams are beginning to become a reality in the United States. I am very surprised, and very glad.

AUDIENCE: I understand that you teach at Todai (Tokyo University) now?

OKADA: Yes.

AUDIENCE: People often say that there's an interesting story behind your interesting employment. I was wondering if there is an interesting story behind how you got to teach at Todai?

OKADA: Are you asking what I'm teaching at Tokyo University, or how do I teach there...? Of course, most of you do not know about Tokyo University--it is the top university in Japan. It's like Harvard or M.I.T. in the United States. Most of the of the executive people are from Tokyo University--the most powerful Japanese business executives, or political and government people--all of them are educated at Tokyo University. And I thought, "Maybe, I can teach at Tokyo University, so I can control the top Japanese people" [LAUGHS]. So, it is very good for us otaku. Not *them* [LAUGHS]. So, I had a very dirty plan in my head. Sorry, I can't talk about it [LAUGHS]. It's not so illegal--but, it's almost legal, so--

AUDIENCE: Stop the camera, stop the camera.

OKADA: --I've also been telling the teachers at Tokyo University a little lie: [AUTHORITATIVE VOICE] "There are many otaku in the United States. Right now, most U.S. executive people are otaku, watching animated films." And Tokyo University teachers believe it [LAUGHS]. So I go at Tokyo University. But it's a secret (puts finger to lips) [LAUGHS].

AUDIENCE: Do you have any other plans in the future to create an anime?

OKADA: Not in this century.

AUDIENCE: I have one question about GUNBUSTER. A lot of people in America don't know whether to consider it a serious story, or just a frivilous story, or a serious parody of space anime. How was GUNBUSTER treated in your mind when you made it?

OKADA: The confusion is not only in the United States. Most of the Japanese otaku who saw it are confused about whether it's a parody, or whether it's meant as serious--whether the staff is serious, or just saying some bad jokes, but--basically what it was, when I made it, I found that every other science fiction plot was taken [LAUGHS]. The only thing I could find to make a real space science-fiction was to make a parody film. So basically, what I'm saying, is that if someone goes into space, you could take it two ways: you can make it, one, the story of a hero--or you can make a parody of it. To travel into space, that's a moment of history, and you could make it in a truthful style, a hero's story--or a parody, and it just basically depends on the viewer's side--of how to take the truth of that historical event--as a parody, or a hero's story. There are two components to GUNBUSTER: one, it's a robot animation where a girl goes out into space and destroys monsters; the other story is that it holds the concept that it's *impossible* for a girl to pilot a robot of that size, and then destroy all these monsters with kicks and punches. There are two impules that arise when you make animation: one, "This is a real, true story--it's got a plot, it's just not animation." But then that calms down, and that idealism turns cold, and it turns just into, "Oh, it's just anime, it's just animation--it's not something with a real plot." So, what I wanted to do in GUNBUSTER was combine those two elements: while you're watching a parody, and relaxing, you're thinking, "Oh, well, this is a parody," and then at the same time, with the plot, you see, you get the feeling, "It's great that I'm watching animation."

AUDIENCE: I'd like to ask the *sensei* if he's going to be using the medium of computer animation more often.

OKADA: Mr. Miyazaki's new movie, MONONOKE-HIME, is going to be using 80 cuts of computer graphics in it. If there were more opportunity, time, or availability, he would have wanted to use 120 cuts in it. So Mr. Miyazaki is also one of the people starting to use computer graphics, too. And, also, Mr. Miyazaki says, "If we'd had a computer system when we made LAPUTA, there's half of it I'd like to remake." So there's great possibilities with computer graphics. And Mr. Anno has said, in remaking the last two episodes of EVANGELION, he's going to Studio Ghibli to study Mr. Miyazaki's system. And that studio has a big system for computer-graphics images. I've heard they've got five, or seven, Silicon Graphics workstations. What Anno wants to make is a "snow world"-- the Eva units fighting the enemy amidst a world of snow, on a snow- covered mountain. But it's very difficult to portray snow falling and piling, and the robots walking through the snow--it's very difficult to draw by the human hand. Mr. Anno wants to make a masterful scene of a battle amongst the snow. Computer graphics are very expensive, and very difficult to use, but they have great possibilities. I've heard that James Cameron went to Production I.G., the studio that made GHOST IN THE SHELL, and asked the president of Production I.G. for five of his animators, because he wants to make a full computer- graphics film. But Production I.G. said no, because Cameron's offer was very bad. Bad, because Mr. Cameron was thinking, "Oh, Japanese animation, it is very low price! So, I think, maybe--ten thousand dollars-- for a thousand dollars for each man, I can get the best animators in Japan!" And he said so; and Mr. Ishikawa, who is the president of Production I.G., said [STERNLY] "No! It is very expensive!" So Mr. Cameron quit.

AUDIENCE: Many Americans believe the line Kubo [OTAKU NO VIDEO] has concerning wanting to become the tyrannical king to be a reference to Nostradamus. We were wondering if it really is, and if Gainax was into other forms of Western occultism, like Masonry, or the Knights of Malta.

OKADA: No, no! (waves dismissively at audience).

PANEL: [TO AUDIENCE MEMBER] You're a bad boy!

OKADA: The setting of 1983 is still the primary focus of OTAKU NO VIDEO, and the characters in that video during the time had seen the movie, NOSTRADAMUS: THE MAN WHO SAW THE FUTURE [narrated by Orson Welles-*ed.*]. Anyway, what it was, is that, their idea--that vision was so strong in their minds that they presented that story. And what I wanted to do was for people to see it, and make that, and say, "Oh, there are still people like this!" or, "Yes, that was the way it was back then."

AUDIENCE: A lot of your films and TV series are very innovative, creative--they bend [sic] the envelope--leaders...NADIA showed a person of color as a main character, a lot of--WINGS OF HONNEAMISE is a very meticulously-crafted film, a very complex film...Is there anything out there now that you see which can be measured as a--pushing the envelope, an intelligent creation, something different?

OKADA: There was a normal standard back then, during those times, and there was one set for normal animation, and Gainax was the one who would make these "weird" animations. But then GHOST IN THE SHELL and MEMORIES came out, so--those are the "weird" ones. So--there's really no purpose, or place to make--there is no "weird" animation any more, as I see it.

AUDIENCE: How well were MEMORIES and GHOST IN THE SHELL received in Japan?

OKADA: Everybody thought it was a big hit in the States, so it was a big hit in Japan [LAUGHS]. Kodansha says, "It's the number one hit in the United States!" and most Japanese believe it. [LAUGHS] So: "Oh, we must see it!" [LAUGHS]

AUDIENCE: Does that mean, sort of, you see a lot of Western-style animation now taking over a lot of the studios--now they're looking towards the West when they create something?

OKADA: Basically, they can't do it, even if they consciously thought about it-- because, if a Japanese company tried to make a T.V. anime show for the U.S., the code of the U.S. T.V. networks is so strict--like, you can't punch or kick somebody, so...what they're thinking is, "We'll make this, so, we'll put it on video in the U.S., so please buy it." Basically what it is, for the producers and presidents of animation companies, all that they can see is that, to make it in American animation, or make it appealing to the American population, is to make the eyes smaller and the chin larger, and so they can do that. And then, to make it a happy ending, with the good guys always winning [LAUGHS].

AUDIENCE: I was wondering as to what your recommendation would be for mid-'70s *sentai* shows. [LAUGHS]

OKADA: SUN VULCAN. Basically, before SUN VULCAN, it was all just--five people go after the evil guy. After than, SUN VULCAN just basically set the standards for movement, and action--and--robots came after that, but it basically that set the standard for things you see today. If you watch SUN VULCAN, and then BATTLE FEVER J, one episode during the middle of the season, and DAI RANGER, then basically you're a veteran [LAUGHS].

AUDIENCE: On American television right now, German car manufacturing company Volkswagen is using what we call SPEED RACER, what we call MACH [MAHA] GO GO GO, in selling German automobiles in the United States. Would you feel happy to see something of your work being used in American T.V. to sell a product?

OKADA: I don't care, as long as the studio gets the money for it so everyone could go on a hot-springs trip. It's fine with me [LAUGHS].

AUDIENCE: Many Japanese intellectuals are Christians. Similarly, the characters in OTAKU NO VIDEO were clearly outcasts. Do you believe that liminality is necessary for creativity? [SOTTO VOCE] Try and translate that one, pal.

PANEL: Are you a psychology major? This is getting too deep for me.

OKADA: Eh?!

PANEL: [TO AUDIENCE MEMBER] See, you're a bad boy!

OKADA: Maybe you have some secret knowledge of Japan. Maybe you're a Stonecutter [LAUGHS]. One more time, please.

AUDIENCE: O.K....Do you feel it is easier for social outcasts to be creative, to invent original ideas?

OKADA: That's right. Basically, creativity will not come out of happy lives, but from people who become outcasts. There is no reason for you to become *purposely* unhappy. 'Cause everybody who watches anime is happy--the people who watch it who are *not* happy, are the people who make it [LAUGHS]. It's not too good of a thing to make anime. I think a peaceful life is to take anime merchandise cheap from Japan, and then sell it expensively over here and/or work at Viz and make some weird American anime magazine. Very happy! [LAUGHS]

AUDIENCE: Lots of your programs are very contemporary or futuristic. Why have you never made a period film like THE HAKKENDEN, or something else? Are you just forward-thinking, not looking at the past?

OKADA: Because I'm a science-fiction fan. So, I can make just a future, or near-future, or robot, or girl-fights-against-space-monster-and-saves- Galaxy story, that's O.K., but--ninja, or samurai, or sword--Ha? [LAUGHS].

AUDIENCE: They have robot ninja in some films...

OKADA: That's nice [LAUGHS]. Have you ever heard of AKAKAGE? It was a live-action series in Japan, about 30 years ago. The Akakage ninja, red-masked ninja T.V. series. In that T.V. series, there were many monsters, large *kaiju* monsters or mecha, just like Area 45 [?], or these kind of very strange stories. I loved it. So--if you can make some ninja story or ancient Japanese story, maybe I can make some monsters, or some strange mecha, but, normal, fantasy samurai stories, or ninja stories--sorry, I can't make it. There is no motivation in my heart.

AUDIENCE: If you had the chance to do it again, would you do an epilogue to THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE?

PANEL: I'm guessing, it's because you don't get the ending?

AUDIENCE: No, I get the ending, but--sometimes it leaves you with a feeling of wanting more. Just a little bit more, to see what happens with the characters.

OKADA: In THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE's story, that planet is six light years from our Earth. So, I told Mr. Yamaga, we should make a continuation story where their spaceship, not interplanetary, but interstellar, arrives here 100 years after the time of HONNEAMISE. So, they come to our Earth, and make contact with Earth. So, it is a continuity of that story. But it is very difficult to make. The plot I want to have, if I am to make a continuation of THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE, is to have the story of them making their own interstellar ship, And that ship will arrive in our solar system right about the time Earth is able to colonize Mars. Not a warp drive, but an acceleration ship.

AUDIENCE: A long trip.

OKADA: Yes. It would take 30 or 40 years. And then I'd try to show the conflict between the two cultures, the two planets. I would be really enthusiastic were I able to make a war between the two planets.

AUDIENCE: Apparently one of the more difficult aspects of translation is to carry over trivialities of the other culture. Some American anime companies include a pamphlet to explain references to Japanese culture in the films they release. Last year we learned that an American show, THE SIMPSONS, which is based almost completely on American errata, was distributed in Japan. I was wondering how it was received there?

OKADA: It was not popular at all. It was only the hard-core otaku who really watched it. My favorite episode was the one where the Simpsons went to Itchy-and-Scratchy-Land, but no other Japanese understood it. Ha? [LAUGHS] "Very strange animation."

AUDIENCE: You were an ordinary otaku, and then you became the president of one of the most influential anime studios. And then you changed from being president, to some, like, professor. So how would you describe these three different phases of your life, and which phase did you most enjoy?

OKADA: I've had fun in all parts of my life. What it was, is I became an otaku and tried to have as much fun as I could, and when I came to the limit of having fun as an ordinary otaku, I jumped to Gainax. And then when I was in Gainax, I came to the limit of making animation and games, I then jumped to becoming a professor.

PANEL: Our time is almost up. Are there possibly one or two other people who would like to ask Mr. Okada a question?

AUDIENCE: Do you think that there is any difference in being an otaku today, than an otaku in 1983 or 1985? I mean, is it easier, is it harder--do you feel there's any difference the way the otaku are perceived in the eyes of society?

OKADA: The difference I see is that it's becoming merchandise-based. And if they see something wrong with it, they don't have this burning sensation inside of them to basically say, "Well, if I made it like this--" For example, if you watch RANMA 1/2, and say, "Well, there's something wrong here, but if I made it like *this*, it's going to be like this..." But I don't see that burning sensation as much in the United States or Japan as I did back in 1983 or 1985. What I first started learning in my high school years, when I saw STAR BLAZERS, UCHU SENKAN YAMATO, it was like, "If I had made it like this, it would have been like this." So there's not too much of that anymore, so I guess it's like, "Oh, well, then, I guess everybody's happy--that's fine, then."

PANEL: We're going to have two more people--I have them here...and we'll get to them, shortly.

AUDIENCE: Konnichiwa, Okada-sensei. What I would like to know is your relationship to Shigeru Watanabe when you planned out THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE.

OKADA: Ha! O.K., O.K. Interesting question. You know Shigeru Watanabe?

AUDIENCE: I'm not familiar with him...

OKADA: Right now, he's an executive at Bandai Visual. And he still has a religion: he believes in Mamoru Oshii, just like Jesus Christ [PRAYS TO HEAVEN]. In those days, in 1983 or 1984, he asked of everything to Mr. Oshii: "Is it good, or is it bad?" And if Mr. Oshii said, "Oh, it's good!," so Mr. Watanabe would think, "Oh, it's good, it's good, I must make it, I must make it!" And then I told Mr. Watanabe, "I want to make this film, THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE," and he thinks, "I think it's a good idea, but I can't decide if it's *really* good. So--just a moment, I must go to Mr. Oshii's house" [RUNS IN PLACE; LAUGHS]. And Mr. Oshii says, "Oh-- it's interesting!" So, he thought, "It's good, it's good, it's good!" [LAUGHS] And it's a very powerful motivation for him, inside. So, he works very hard, and gets a very large budget for our film from the president of Bandai. So Mr. Oshii, he is a very good person for me, or for Studio Gainax, but...but...it is very strange to say, "Maybe it is good, but maybe it is not so good." It was a religion. But just now, Mr. Watanabe, he's come out of his brainwashing. So, he sometimes says: "Maybe...maybe, *maybe*, Mr. Oshii is sometimes wrong." [LAUGHS]

PANEL: We have a last question.

AUDIENCE: Some people say that the late '70s and early 1980s were sort of a golden age of Japanese animation. And some people say that that golden age is over. What do you think?

OKADA: That period, that golden age you're talking about, is when there were variations--a golden age of variations. And then, for expression of other elements, it's the 1980s. For U.S. science-fiction, the 1950s were the golden age of expression, and setting the stage for that were the 1930s. In the same terms, in anime, the time for time for setting up the variations were the 1970s, and the golden age of expressions and new ideas were the 1980s.

PANEL: That's about all the time we have for today, or in this room--I want to thank you very much, Mr. Okada, for coming, and speaking to us. I know you have an autograph session [DOUBLE TAKE]--tomorrow. [LAUGHS]

OKADA: [RELIEVED] I know, I know!

Sunday

After two days of showings and signings, Okada returned to an early-morning press session. It was 8 a.m., and out of a convention-wearied audience, only a handful of people showed up. (Including transcriber Carl Gustav Horn and several Japanese industry personnel). In an out-of-the-way meeting room, the question-and-answer session began.

AUDIENCE: I wanted to ask: at Otakon, you said that you thought that Gainax was now almost a regular company, that they had control over their work, better control than in the old days--

OKADA: Yeah.

AUDIENCE: --But, I've heard many stories about how on EVANGELION--

OKADA: [SMILES] Yes!

AUDIENCE: --there were many problems with budget, and time, so do you think things have changed, really?

OKADA: Not so. It's almost the same, from what I said to you at Otakon. You must remember that EVANGELION is produced at Tatsunoko, so the schedule is out of the control of Gainax--it's the responsibility of Tatsunoko. Tatsunoko almost rules, when it comes to control. So, I think, the responsibility was not with Gainax. People say, "It's the responsibility of Mr. Anno," but they're wrong. Control over schedule is the responsibility of the producer. But Tatsunoko and T.V. Tokyo couldn't handle it. It was out of Gainax's control.

AUDIENCE: I talked to a person from Tatsunoko. He said he does does not blame Mr. Anno, but he blames other people at Gainax, who might be telling Anno about his schedule, and--

OKADA: Oh! I think producers always say that. But I talked with Mr. Anno about this a month ago, and then he said, "I'm *almost* the producer of EVANGELION, but I must be so, because Tatsunoko did not do anything for EVANGELION." See, he is very disappointed with Tatsunoko, and some rumors have said that Tatsunoko lost the film, or cels before they were shot.

AUDIENCE: Wow!

OKADA: And I asked Mr. Anno, "Is it the truth?" And he says, in a dark voice, "Yes."

AUDIENCE: Oh, wow.

OKADA: But that was in the middle of the episodes. That wasn't the trouble with the last two episodes, the confusion. It was just Mr. Anno's teleplay. He said to me, "I can make a schedule on my own." At that time, I heard from Mr. Anno about his new plans, so maybe you want to--?

AUDIENCE: Of course.

OKADA: After EVANGELION, his next plan is to make a STAR TREK. Not *that* STAR TREK--a sort of anime like STAR TREK, a crew in a spaceship, who go to every planet, and each planet has its own culture. For example, one planet will have a very democratic culture, and everyone will approve, so they'll board, or they say, "no," and they talk with the crew about everything. And the spaceship crew will sometimes fall in love in some way on the planet, or something will happen--*maybe* some robots fight [LAUGHS]. He wants to make that film, because Mr. Anno thinks it will be a very good experience for the Japanese animation world. But the sponsor says, "It's not so good," because, in Japan these days...of course, you know, several years ago, it was the toy makers, like Bandai, who had a very strong control over the production of anime, and what they would want would be something like, "We need three new robots in this film," and so the anime was made with the three new robots. But right now, it's the record companies, like King, Polydor, or Sony Music Entertainment, who have very strong control over the production of anime. And what *they* want, is, "O.K., we've got two new idol singers, and we want to promote them." And so the anime is made with two new characters.

AUDIENCE: Yes.

OKADA: Yes. And these music company executives think Mr. Anno's new project is not so good for selling new idols, or new characters. Not so good. The success of EVANGELION is not so good for Mr. Anno's new project, because now every company's saying, "We want a new show...just like EVANGELION!" That's the same old story when it comes to anime companies.

AUDIENCE: Having a company as large as Gainax, there had to be moments when things went a little bit further than you wanted, or expected them to. Could you tell me about any of those times?

OKADA: Every time. Are you asking about things like budget, or schedule?

AUDIENCE: Mmm, no, more like...like, the marketing department will want to stress this aspect of a particular release, or the accounting department would say, "Don't do this..." Parts of the company would want to make one type of picture, whereas you or one of the other founders would want to make another type of picture. I'm just asking you to talk about some of the instances where things got a little out of control because the company got too big.

OKADA: Right now, I think there's more than fifty people who work at Gainax. Most of these people work on making computer games, and half of them work on making CD-ROMs, such as the CD-ROM featuring Yoshiyuki Sadamoto's artwork. And there's maybe only two or three people who work on anime. The anime part of Gainax, I think, is Mr. Anno and Mr. Suzuki, and one other person. So, the animation department is very, very small. Most of the people in Gainax just now work on artwork CD-ROMs. When they make anime, they must join forces with another studio. It's a bad case of a company that's grown larger and larger--they have to make a lot of money every year, every month, so they have to make and sell a lot of CD-ROMs, because animation *loses* money. The case of EVANGELION, where they're actually *making* money, is something of a miracle, in the opinion of Gainax executives such as Hiroyuki Yamaga and Mr. Sadamoto, and not something they can expect as normal. They want to keep on making anime, but since it's unprofitable, they must make more CD-ROMs and computer games to balance things out. And so the computer game department gets larger and larger, and the animation department gets smaller and smaller. It's not good.

AUDIENCE: Did you ever foresee something like that happening? The animation being slowly phased out, while something you had never even thought of gets phased in? Back when you founded Gainax, you couldn't have forseen how CD-ROMs would take off. I don't suppose you ever imagined that the animation department would be slowly kicked to the side, while CD-ROMs became ascendant.

OKADA: None of us foresaw that it would happen, of course.

AUDIENCE: I wanted to ask, uh--

OKADA: --I was thinking, maybe I'm free, now! [LAUGHS]

AUDIENCE: EVANGELION, of course, is the first Gainax anime that you did not produce. Now that it's all over, and you look back at it, can you say how it would have been different, had you yourself produced it? Would it have been different in style, or mood?

OKADA: I think the style, or mood, of EVANGELION, is not so far, not so different, from the serious side of GUNBUSTER or NADIA. The biggest difference would have been in the style of planning the last episode. My style is to always plan the ending *first,* as I did with GUNBUSTER--everything then follows from that. In NADIA, Mr. Anno couldn't decide on the ending--it wasn't fixed until only three months before the final episode was shown. So subsequently, I was confused about NADIA, and there was a lack of control over the various episodes. EVANGELION is a very great series--I think it's one of the top anime ever made. But--the last scenes were never fixed. When I talked to Mr. Anno a month ago, he said he couldn't decide the ending until the time came. That's his style. So, if I had made EVANGELION with him, I couldn't do such a thing. I'd think I'd have to fix the ending, what would happen with every character. Then, everything would follow: the first episode, the second episode...If I wanted to show a boy's coming-of-age story, a *bildungsroman,* the last scene would show the grown-up man; the first scene, a boy who hates everything about the adult world. That would be the structure; I'm very careful about a regular construction. But Mr. Anno's style on EVANGELION was not so. He wants to put it together episode-by-episode. It's just like the style of a manga. In your typical manga, the artist doesn't have any picture of the last scene, or the last episode. They just think of building up on past episodes. And finally, the manga artist, and his assistants, and editor...[BURIES HEAD IN HANDS], they work out an idea about the last sequence. If it's a good idea, the whole episode is very good. If they can't make a good idea, the whole episode is not so good. It's an unhappy story. And I think that's what happened with the last two episodes of EVANGELION. Mr. Anno and his staff couldn't make a good idea for it. He told an anime magazine in Japan that he couldn't make what he wanted because of schedule or budget. But that's not correct. I talked with Mr. Yamaga and Mr. Anno. They said, "It's not only a problem of schedule or budget. It's a problem of what the ending is going to be." Mr. Anno couldn't decide. Mr. Anno's and my own style of production are very different.

AUDIENCE: At the Expo, many of the fans asked Mr. Anno about episodes #25 and #26. He said, "I don't have a problem about the way it ended. If there's a problem, it's with you guys." Then he grabbed the mic and said, in English, "Too bad."

OKADA: Eh? [LAUGHS] He thinks so. OK: I want to say to every animation fan: don't touch him this year [LAUGHS]. Because many anime and *seiyuu* magazines are asking Mr. Anno that question, and every time his answer changes. It's "confused, confuse-er, confuse-est." He's not happy right now. Maybe you know that back in January, or February, he shaved his head. It's a Japanese gesture of contrition. People said, "Oh, he's feeling a lot of responsibility towards the producer, or T.V. Tokyo, or the sponsor." Not so. He felt a very strong responsibility about *his* stuff. "Sorry, I can't do it!" So he shaved his head. This summer, he hates anime fans. I think he'll feel happier by autumn.

AUDIENCE: Some people I know said they thought the ending was very interesting-- the ending reminded them of OTAKU NO VIDEO, because in the ending episodes you see the set, the script--in other words, they say, "Yes, this is an anime show"--instead of pretending this is a story, they come out and remind you that this is a fantasy, an anime show. And no one's ever seen that before in an anime program.

OKADA: Yeah, maybe that's right. Right now, many anime fans in Japan are fighting each other over whether that ending was good or bad. Some say, "Anno must feel no obligation towards the fans--he must make something true to himself." Many fans are fighting over this. Your question has come up in these debates. In my personal opinion, if he wanted to make such a statement, to say, "this is just fiction, and you should go back to the real world," he could do it a better way. If that's what he wanted to say, it's not necessary to make an anime to do it. But he's still an animator, and he wants to make another anime series. So his true mind does not say, "it's only animation, and I should go back to the real world." So I think Mr. Anno's confused just now.

AUDIENCE: I'd like to hear something about your books.

OKADA: OK...I've already written two books. The second one, the new one, is INTRODUCTION TO OTAKUOLOGY, which answers "what is an otaku, and what is otaku culture, in Japan and in the world?" My first book was OUR BRAINWASHING SOCIETY, was about business, society and the media, and what may happen over the next thirty years. And I think my third book will be about evolution and the human motivation to make culture, politics, and science. I'm very interested in the question of the interaction between society and the media over the next thirty or fifty years. I'd like to write two or three more books--one about otaku outside of Japan. Just like you, or Russian otaku, or Turkish otaku, or Chinese otaku...I want to ask these people what they feel about Japanese otaku culture, or what Japan means to them. I'll write perhaps two books more on otaku and animation culture.

AUDIENCE: If you had the chance to pick a story or manga that's already out there, and turn it into an anime film, which would you like to see done?

OKADA: I'm not interested in taking a manga that's already interesting and turning it into an anime. I'd rather take a manga that's *not* very interesting and make it better as an anime. A good manga is a good manga--if anyone makes an anime based on it, it's not better than the manga, or more than the manga originally was--merely that manga in a different medium. And I think that's a waste of time, opportunity, and money. I sometimes say that RANMA 1/2 is a case like this. Everyone must read Rumiko Takahashi's original manga. But in my opinion, the anime version is not greater than the manga. Some producers want to make good anime from good manga. When you have a good manga to work from, it's easy to attract a sponsor, a studio, and staff. Good manga have the kind of star power that will make animators and character designers say, "Oh, I want to work on that! I love that manga!" So, it's very easy to get your production together. But that's not my style. My style is to look for a good idea, or a good scene, in the midst of a not-so-good manga. If I make it into an anime, maybe it can be better than it was. I heard that Mr. Miyazaki thinks the same way. In FUTURE BOY CONAN, he took the basic novel THE INCREDIBLE TIDE, by Alexander Key--not a very good story, in Mr. Miyazaki's view. But he said, "I can take that story, and make a good anime out of it." He has the power to turn a not-so-good story into a good anime. I think he's a not-so-good person--just like me.

AUDIENCE: I was curious--in your youth, what were the non-anime, non-manga influences that turned you into a science-fiction fan?

OKADA: *Tokusatsu,* and science...In 1970, in Japan, the world Expo was held in Osaka. The theme was human progress. I was only an eleven year-old boy back then, and I thought, science can do everything, and make everything better. Man has gone to the Moon, and he'll go to Mars, and Pluto, and to other solar systems. Everything can happen, and everyone will be happy. And I thought the United States could do anything; everyone there is happy. We Japanese will follow them. So we believed then. Of course I can't say that now, in these confused times, but the 1970 Osaka Expo had a tremendous influence on me then, as a young man--that humanity shall progress towards everything, and progress is good. I don't think so, right now...but deep in my mind, there's still a little voice saying, "Human progress is very good! Trust the United States!" [LAUGHS]

AUDIENCE: I remember, in CYBER COMIX NADIA, there was a story set at Expo '70.

OKADA: Oh, yeah.

AUDIENCE: I was just wondering how come you left Gainax in the first place?

OKADA: At first, all the producers and people who helped me there were weak-- they needed me, my help. But now, they've developed their strengths, and they don't need me any more.Many people ask me this, and I always answer, "Everyone has to graduate." I had to graduate once to making films. But now I'm very interested in the the world of journalism, of writing non-fiction. If I were to go back, and be president of Gainax, I think I could make another good anime. But just *good.* Just good. Not something miraclulous, not something that would change everything. Those days have passed for me, so I left the world of anime and entered the world of writing books and teaching at university. Maybe five or ten years from now, computer graphics will have advanced to a point where maybe I could make one or two more films--but maybe I won't. Right now, I don't know.

Yoshiyuki Sadamoto Illustrations [Saturn] by Gainax

- Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=33uw7WvceTA
- Translation: Riki

This is a rough transcript of an interview with Yoshiyuki Sadamoto in 1997.

Yoshiyuki Sadamoto Illustrations [Saturn] by Gainax Digital art collection software by Yoshiyuki Sadamoto, the character designer for Neon Genesis Evangelion and others.

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Yoshiyuki Sadamoto

1962 Born on January 29, in Tokuyama City (now Shunan City), Yamaguchi Prefecture

1984 Graduated from Tokyo Zokei University, Department of Fine Arts

Participated in the establishment of GAINAX in December of the same year

At the age of 22, worked as a character designer and art director for "Royal Space Force: The Wings of Honnêamise".

1989 "Nadia, The Secret of Blue Water" character design

1991 Serialized "R20" in Monthly Newtype Magazine

1992 "Uru in Blue" character design

1994 "Neon Genesis EVANGELION" started serialization in Monthly Shonen Ace.

Currently active in a wide range of fields including animation, comics, and illustration.

Royal Space Force: The Wings of Honnêamise

Released in March 1987, animated feature film

Now that I think about it, I wonder how frowzy the Royal Space Force pictures are. This picture is not really my taste, or maybe it's a new challenge for me, and I had to struggle with it. In short, it is a picture that I drew while studying, rather than just using my existing personal style. Riquinni was the only one who didn't have a model. I made it very fictional. In my mind. "There must be a kid like this," I imagined.

When I designed Riquinni, rather than thinking of her as a cute character from Shirotsugh's point of view, from my point of view I was thinking, "If a girl like her was religious and tried to recruit me, I'd be more interested in her herself than the content of her religion." That's how I feel. I didn't have any know-how at all, so I started with as much realism as possible, like drawing lots of portraits of the people around me. Perhaps the unique frowzy of the Royal Space Force is, in essence, the frowzy of the people who were around me. I think that's what it is.

Nadia, The Secret of Blue Water

April 1990 - April 1991, TV animation series

Depending on the resolution, to what extent should the picture be drawn clearly? Will it be shown as a picture? Or is it something to be shown as a cell, with a person adding animation, coloring, and passing it through a monitor? It's all a matter of what I'm trying to keep in my mind when I'm drawing, so if I'm drawing a cel for a TV series and it's later printed out as a picture, there's a lot of cases where I say, "Oh no". However, illustrations for packages and the like are always seen as still pictures, so I try to draw them as well as I can when time permits. I see the cels as they are in animation, in other words, as pictures in animation. There's a portrait aspect to it. On the other hand, with illustrations, I'm more conscious of the expansion of the image.

For example, there are no pictures like that in the animation, but there might have been a scene like that, so I try to create a supplementary image. I wanted to depict something like the expansion of space associated with animation, including time. In the case of illustrations, unlike cells, I can pursue a sense of reality. I think that a cell is a film, with music, voice actors, and other things that add to the overall sense of reality. When it comes to illustrations, I have to pursue a sense of reality in a single picture, and then I think that a cell is just a cell. In my mind, a sense of reality is closer to that of an illustration. So, in my mind, the cell and the illustration are connected. A story is created by the images you see when you look at the pictures. Therefore, the first image board is very important.

I believe that it may even influence the world view of the story. It's a kind of a post-apocalyptic story of the last episode, which is too peaceful, from my point of view. The pictures of Electra and Mari's later stories. I don't know, I guess. They are the stories of people who lived through those times and struggled to survive. I didn't want it to be just a cheerful story. I wanted to draw pictures that would make people feel the depth of life, or something like that.

As for the last part of the animation, I think that's fine. I'm sure they had a more difficult time before they got there. When I draw, the first priority is to create a picture that I want to see.

It also depends on what I'm interested in at that time. If I was interested in sidecars, which is totally different from Nadia, I would want to draw this somehow. Jean, too, if you look at him, you'll think it's Norman Rockwell. It's just like a Norman Rockwell painting, but this one is exactly like that. I made it with that in mind. At that time, I thought Norman Rockwell was good, so I made it with that in mind. The painting itself, I think that's what motivated me to draw when I was a kid. You want a car, you want to ride in a car, you want to fly in an airplane. So you draw. That's still my motivation for drawing pictures, I think.

1991 Kadokawa Shoten Comp RPG series, Tabletop role-playing game (original work: Ryo Mizuno and Group SNE)

It was a game, and I had no idea that it was a game where items increased and so on. There are also things like changing clothes in the story. I had a lot of trouble with the character design. The characters take off their armor, but I hadn't thought about how the characters would look without it. It's a world where mechanics don't come into play very often. It's not mechanical, it's metal. Is it aluminum, iron, gold, or silver? If it's a string, is it made of hemp or cotton?

It's not that I didn't like fantasy, it's just that I hadn't seen it before. I think I studied a lot and saw a lot of things at that time. I liked Erik the Viking, Jabberwock, and others. It feels very real, and it's an interesting story about another world. I tried to make it with that in mind.

R20

1991 Kadokawa Shoten, serialized in Newtype Monthly, medium-length comic

I quite like the clear darkness, or something like that. The mysteriousness of fluorescent lights at night, or when you just can't sleep at 2 a.m., and you wander into town on your motorcycle. I think the mood I was in at that time was the mood of my youth. There are a lot of 17-18 year old boys who dress up around Shibuya, aren't there? I wonder if these people are really watching animation. I wonder if they're watching the Nadia we made. I made this work while actually meeting young people and being aware of what they were thinking.

Olympia

1993 Unreleased Animation

As for the woman wearing the idol-like clothes, Akai-san had the original design, and I developed the image of her into my own character. The protagonist is a mysterious executive on an enemy planet, like Char. The machine man is like a maintenance robot that joins Olympia. I think the girl is a counterpart to the machine man, a character like Mari in Nadia. This is the ultimate weapon created by the people of Earth, and she is protecting her comrades. They meet each other one by one, and in the end, they become one giant robot to fight against the enemy. The storyline is a bit like an RPG game.

Uru in Blue

1993 Feature-length animation (under planning)

It's a vision of cool, not just stylish or nice, but just plain good looking. That's why I created all the characters to be cool. I pursued the idea that "each character is cool". I think it's one of the best things about Japanese animation. I made this film with the idea of what will happen to it in the future. I felt like I had a pretty good shot in terms of drawing.It's Ur's mood, the mood in his mind, their mood. I had been working on Nadia and GunBuster in between, but I thought I'd go beyond that and create a picture that was a pure flow from the Royal Space Force. The feeling I had when I made Royal Space Force was that if I made it now, it would look like this.

Neon Genesis EVANGELION (Image Board)

For me, Evangelion is mainly a manga project. This is also a flow from Olympia, Anno's next animation project. When I received that offer, I thought about what I would draw next after the Nadia TV series. The first thing that came to mind was that it would no longer be a visual thing. I came up with the idea that it would be better to focus more on human drama and such. So, I decided to make a character that would be easy to express the mood of the main character, something I hadn't done before in robot animation. As a result, it ended up looking like Mobile Suit Gundam.

The current trend in animation is to have characters with pointy eyes and hair; if you think about it realistically, such characters would be impossible to exist. I think that's fine for animation, but the moment you combine that with robots, it becomes very boring. I think it would have more impact if a robot suddenly appeared in the world of Nippon Animation, with its kind of lame characters. I think I can create a strange world. That was the initial inspiration for creating it. We decided to make a film along those lines. It's a kind of a style of Nippon Animation. In terms of character design, we decided to try to create a fixed character this time.

Neon Genesis EVANGELION'

(1994- Kadokawa Shoten, serialized in Monthly Shonen Ace Full-length comic)

This time, I tried to keep the celluloid images for animation and the painted illustrations for manga quite separate from each other. I wanted to have the animation staff draw the celluloid images. I separated the animation from the manga. They complement each other, or at least they complement each other's weaknesses, so (at least in my mind) I tried to avoid drawing celluloid as much as possible this time. This time, I think the covers of Shonen Ace will be the focus of the collection.

Since it was the cover of a magazine, I couldn't really use colors that gave the impression of a classic or vintage world, which I'm good at. That's why you see a lot of pictures with colors that are quite loud in my opinion. As for the pictures in the manga book, I tried to create a sense of story behind the pictures. I put poems on top of the pictures, so that the layout is more like a picture book, or more like an image board, a bit like a fantasy. For example, there are three people in a row, and only one of them is looking at the camera, or is looking at the camera in a lonely way. These are not storyboards, and they are not poses for pictures on magazine covers. The pictures included in the manga books are drawn with this in mind.

etc.

If the race queens rode motorcycles as they were, the show would not be as interesting. It's a bit of a shallow idea, isn't it? All of these characters are artificial humans. They are turned on, given life, and by the time they are turned off, their only dream is to win the race. The key word was "nationalism," or Honda, Toyota, Nissan, etc. I simply thought that if such a race actually existed, it would be the ultimate race. It was a rather shallow idea, wasn't it? I just wanted to get close to a girl like her. I thought about what I should place for balance. I thought it would be best to place it next to a girl in a bright red dress that emphasized the lines of her body.

Megumi Ogata: Koji Ide's Evangelion Forever (09/1997)

- Source: https://literaryeagle.tumblr.com/post/159199227144/for-my-fifty-eighth-evangelion-book-review-here; https://forum.evageeks.org/post/921076/Merch-Evangelion-book-review-blog/#921076
- Translation: Richitzer

When it came to Shinji's feelings, it was played naturally.

Ide: It's the second time we've met after the movie was released.

Ogata: Certainly. I met you first right after you saw the movie. I didn't have a lot of time, so I could only talk a little.

Ide: The day after I saw the movie, I was so excited (laughs). At the time, I got 100 points, but when I went to see it again, I was worried because there were so many things I didn't understand (laughs).

Ogata: After expected (laughs).

Ide: How were the surrounding reactions after the release?

Ogata: Various. Some people have come to conclusions by themselves and it seems some people say it's okay even if they can't come to a conclusion.

Ide: Well, Shinji was good in the movie. But aren't there a lot of voices saying "Shinji is weak."?

Ogata: I've grown a lot (laughs).

Ide: Even among the listeners from 'Gerge', 'Is Shinji good or bad' has become a big controversy. (Gerge or Geruge is a place from the Bible where Jesus drove Legion (my name is legion, for we are many) out of a man and into some pigs.)

Ogata: Is that so... Each person has their own perspective. Even within myself, my opinions are divided. For example, no matter how long before (shooting) I get the script, I read it at least twice. Firstly, I look at it from the standpoint of an enemy actor and grasp the general flow.

That's why I read it from the perspective of the role the second time, and then I put what I found from both perspectives into the play.

Ogata: However, in the case of eva, I often think "What is this??" the first time (laughs) As "Megumi Ogata" I don't really understand. I think "Why do you say this?" or "Why do you do this?" However, when I read it as Shinji, it all connects neatly. It's strange but...

Ide: It's not that Anno says something but rather when you start taking in the role of Shinji that it feels like that?

Ogata: Yes. Looking at the script with Shinji's feelings, it's natural. If this happens in reality, it seems natural. Besides, even if there are some worries left, you can understand it when you see the film. The film is made so carefully, and even if there are still things I don't understand, when I throw a line at another voice actor, my heart moves in a natural flow.

Ide: You can get into the role.

Ogata: People in other roles may have been quite annoyed. If I was Misato-san, I might have been worried about "What is an AT field?" and "What is an umbilical cable?" but I'm Shin-chan, so I don't know how difficult that is. I didn't have to (know) (laughs). Therefore, Eva is still not a difficult work for me. Rather, it is a natural depiction of an ordinary 14 year old boy, who is a mundane (day-to-day) production, develops in such an environment.

Ide: I see, is that so?

Ogata: However, for the customers (consumers), they are also watching the scenes of characters other than Shin-chan, so you might think "what's this?". As a spectator this time, when I saw the completed movie version, I thought "Oh I don't understand" (laughs)

Ide: As expected (laughs)

Ogata: But actually, there were some scenes in this movie that I didn't understand when I saw the script. The flow of feelings is cut off by all means. So if I went into dubbing as it was, it would take time and cause trouble for the people around me, so I called Director Anno. Afterall, I met the day before dubbing and spoke (with him) for about 4 hours. To talk about my questions and get an explanation... In some cases, I could understand like "Oh, I see", in other cases, there were things the director was convinced of (that I had to accept). However, since the film is already made, the only place it was possible to make a change was where the picture was not changed (as in, can't change lip sync).

Ogata: ...after all, there were two places where the lines changed.

Ide: Where exactly is that?

Ogata: The first place was when Misato died when Shin-chan got down by the elevator and the first machine was stuck in bakelite. Shin-chan says while holding his knees "Because I can't pilot the Eva, there's nothing I can do." At first, it was a line that said "I should have come." So I was indignant, "What could I have done so suddenly?"

Ide: That's right, if you got that far, it won't work. Misato is dead too.

Ogata: Misato told me so far, no matter how weak I was, you're a man now, and in that case, take action! (laughs) But when I tried to get on, I couldn't. I knew it. I wouldn't have had a strong impetus to break Bakelite, so the result was the picture of me holding my knees, but I wonder if I could have made you feel like I was en route. So after all, it was like that.

Ide: It's deep (laughs).

Ogata: The second place was when Shin-chan, who saw Asuka messed up, I put in some ad libs. But in the script, "I saw Unit 02 was cut off by the Eva series" it was written as "just a crying throat" So I said "why are you only crying?" (laughs). No matter how much it is, when I see Unit 2 being done in like that, I wonder if it feels like 'Chikusho', at least. (The only think I could find about Chikusho was a REALLY weird surreal youtube channel.) Shinji said he never wanted to fight.

I understand that. There was nothing good between Shinji and Eva, so doesn't like it anymore. Ayanami died because I piloted the Eva, Touji was hurt, Asuka went crazy, and Kaworu was killed. So I think I didn't want to fight, but I thought that if I had Misato there, I would have a little more to strive for as a human being. His feeling of lethargy at the time was clearly different from the earlier ones. How many lessons to overcome despair. It may be said that he's an adult now. So I don't think I'm willing to pilot aggressively or fight against enemies, but I'm sure there's still a feeling to push for more, something I'd like to see. Even if it changes to 'Chikusho', Shin-chan doesn't do anything and can't do it (laughs).

Ide: But Shinji surpassed Amuro (Amuro Ray, Gundam Character) thanks to doing nothing.

I was wondering when Shinji was going to surpass Amuro. You did in the movie. I think it's a really new hero image.

'THE DIRECTOR SAID "PLEASE SYNCHRONISE THE LAST SCENE WITH ME."

Ide: How was the last seen of the movie as Ms. Ogata?

Ogata: That's a strange story, but when I retook the dubbing, I finally got the feeling. The scene that gave me a retake was the last scene and the living room scene with Asuka. I didn't really understand the last scene. So, as usual, I heard of it the day before dubbing.

Ogata: There is an eye catch in front of the scene with that. (アイキャッチ - eye catch- short clip used to begin and end commercial breaks on Japanese TV) At this time, the end is the epilogue at the end. You can think that it's a continuation of the previous scene, or that there was no previous scene. Director Anno wanted to create a scene that could be interpreted in any way. At that time, the scene direction only said "Sorry, please synchronise with me, not Shinji."

He was a little surprised, but he asked "Then how do you feel about the director? What do you think?" Until then, in 'Eva', I was asked to have a high synchronisation rate with Anno. But Anno is anno, and I am a completely different person, so to be completely the same... That's why I just talked about it... I wanted to cry when I was able to communicate. It was still good, but I wasn't sure what it was like to strangle someone.

Ide: Well, that's true isn't it.

Ogata: At the time of dubbing my main line, my mood was before the eye catch. I feel like "I'm an adult Shin-chan". When I saw it as an audience member, I thought the tone of voice became more mature (laughs)

Ide: You're talking about yourself (laughs).

Ogata: Yeah (laughs). Anyway, I was still at a loss when I was on the main line. But at the time of the retake, I did the last scene right after the scene of the screaming "wow aaahh" which means "everyone should die!" I felt connected for the first time at that time. During the deep, painful, and sad "Die!" By touching upon that, I made an effort to expand the overlapping part of the Shinji in me and the Shinji in Anno-san, the part of our greatest common denominator.

Especially in the movie version "This synchronisation rate has been requested more here than in the TV series, but the most deeply requested scene was the last one." But even if I say it, I can't be me unless my feelings are so. It wouldn't be real, so what am I to do? I was worried if I could become one. But I have to do it. So, at that time, Anno was asked to play the moment when he was able to hug himself for the first time.

Ide: Then, for Anno, that scene is in the direction of brass (colloquial?).

Ogata: That's right. That warmth made me OK for the first time. After that, being mute is not allowable.

Ide: It's difficult dubbing, isn't it?

Ogata: It is. At the time of retake, I really strangled Miyamura once. Actually pulled her down to the floor and sat on her. That's why Miyamura's voice couldn't come out for awhile, which was crazy. Ah, of course I adjusted it (laughs) (for her health, so she wouldn't die).

However, there was a time when we (our performance) wasn't given the OK even after I tried several times and it did not go well. So I thought I'd actually try it (choking). I'm glad I didn't become a real murderer (laughs).

Ide: Amazing. Did you actually do it?

Ogata: No, well, of course that time was special (laughs). Anyway, the hint (direction) when I played was right where the third impact occured, but of course, as Anno said... "You can take it either way." It should be in the film.. I think it's up to the viewer to think what they think.

Ide: As an example, when Director Anno asked Ms. Ogata to "become me", what was Asuka for him?

Ogata: When I heard that... there was still a line that Miyamura was supposed to speak.

Ide: It seems the last line had changed.

Ogata: Yeah. But can I say this? Please check it later. It seems to be modelled after a situation that actually happened to a woman Anno knew. She was being strangled, and at the moment she thought she might be killed—not Anno-san, by the way, just in case—She wanted to caress him, and that's when he came back to reality... Maybe that's what they thought I should try. I'm not the director, so I don't know if it's true or not, but for me, the ending before the eye catch was a mental/spiritual ending, and the scene at the end is a real ending. It was like a snap back to reality, The dubbing was also very real and it was accompanied by a real experience.

Ide: I see.

Ogata: It's a bit of a dirty story, but I was really into the scene as I cried and drooled. I couldn't even blink, my mouth was open, I felt like I was going to die. That's why when I finished that scene, I felt like I was home again... I was happy. After the OK was given, Miyamura and I hugged.

So, as soon as I was relaxed, it suddenly cooled down and I heard the words "I don't want to be killed by you, I don't want to die." The moment he heard that story, Anno said "This is the End of Eva!", It seems he thought that. I'm sure Anno-san actually has various ways to settle love and hate around us. You, I think I wanted to tell you. For the time being, I'm glad Anno-san gave me the OK (laughs)

Ide: I thought that when I saw it for the second time, but it felt like I woke up in a dream for a moment. It also felt like Shinji-kun noticed something. So I was always wondering if this should be considered as a different thing. Well, it may be extra care, but the customers were pleased (laughs). Anno-san was too. I asked him to smile as if he had never seen such a refreshing face on himself before (laughs). Both the audio mixer and the assistant had a nice smile. I was happy.

THE "REALITY" OF ALL THE STAFF HAS COME TO FRUITION IN THE LAST SCENE

Ide: How did it compare to the TV ending?

Ogata: During this time, I happened to see a rebroadcast of Eva in the middle of the night. It was just around the final episode. But after doing the movie, I thought "This was a really happy ending" (laughs). But that was what Anno-san and his colleagues wanted to do at the time.

Ide: The mystery wasn't even revealed in the movies.

Ogata: When I got a letter from a fan of Eva, that's all there was to it. I don't know it, if you were to ask me (laughs). There are a lot of people who are trying to solve the mystery, not the story.

Ide: When I saw it the first time, it was OK, but when I saw it the second time, I was worried about it. Maybe every time I see it, I will feel zigzaged (between those thoughts).

Ogata: After all, I think it's a good piece of work, and if it isn't a work that makes you want to see it two or three times, then I think it isn't entertainment. I think that CDs you want to listen to many times and plays you want to watch many times are good works.

Ide: I also say it every time, but there is a director who can express works that rival that level in live action. I think that level comes from Akira Kurosawa (laughs)

Ogata: I'm looking forward to Anno's next film.

Ide: By the way, Ms. Ogata, do you think it was a good thing to redo episodes 25 and 26 in the movie?

Ogata: Yeah... but I think it was good that they ended up on TV alone. After all, it seems to be the end of a real battle! (laughs). The realism of the staff, including the director, is put in, and I think that the end is energetic and wonderful. The movie is a movie, and the part that was born from the passage of time was added, and it became such a form. I think it was also fun because it had a different taste.

Ide: But to me it feels like "Shinji Ikari!"

Ogata: Thank you! I'm glad because there are many people who say Shin-chan is pathetic (laughs)

Ide: That is not the case, Shinji did well.

So, to conclude, what was Eva for you, Ms. Ogata?

Ogata: It's kinda strange, but it was a work in which time passed more realistically than other anime works, so I feel like it was a real war for me, and I didn't know that at all. I feel like I've seen my own part. It was amazing to make a professional work. For example, when it comes to recording, you can take a lot of time and communicate properly with the staff. The stage is similar to that, isn't it? If anything, I prefer that way of doing it.

So in reality, I always that it was my mission in Eva to talk about the director's intentions and other things, and then to act realistically in the work. I think this is also due to the good films and actors who have prepared an environment where I can hit the roles as much as I can. That is to say that it will not be possible unless really great talants and passions are gathered. I don't think there are many such valuable works, and I don't know if they will contniue. So, as a professional... i think I was very happy to be given such a site as a professional rather than an amature. Thank you very much for your hard work. I would like to take the time to thank you. Thank you very much.

Ide: Looking at Eva, it doesn't seem so much like a job anymore.

Ogata: You can tell that everyone really likes and enjoys doing it. In a sense, I think I'd be happy to put it that way. But in the professional world... it's difficult because of money and time issues...

Ide: It seems that the TV version was being followed for a considerable amount of time.

Ogata: That's right. It must be professional, including that "is it really professional?" question. Anyway, I was given various situations including communication. This is rarely the case. I was happy. I think I was very free. Even if the sound is a little cracked, it's because my feelings are natural. Thanks to that, in the spring movie "Death and Rebirth", it was really hard to play in the theatre, so there were quite a few places where I re-recorded it (laughs)

But that's why, although there are many criticisms, I think it's a great work that proves that even as a professional job, you can still make such works in this way. Therefore, I hope that this Eva will spread in a good way and become a fertilizer for various various other jobs.

Ide: In a word, what is your feeling for Eva?

Ogata: If it's just one word, it's "great work". And "thank you"

Ide: What would you say if you were told to do Shinji again?

Ogata: No, I say I can't do it anymore. (laughs) Shinji in me is finished, I forgot my voice.. (laughs)

That is a joke. It was painful but it was really fun. Thank you to all the people involved and the fans.

Evangelion staff interviews from Schizo/Parano

- Random excerpts from 2 books published in 1997 translated by 1731298478, Xard, Riki et al
- Source http://forum.evageeks.org/post/678403/Original-Broadcast-Episodes-25-26/, http://forum.evageeks.org/thread/10342/Books-Shizo-Parano/, https://forum.evageeks.org/post/895516/Does-Gendo-have-a-small-penis-size-according-to-Anno/#895516 and http://1731298478.tumblr.com/

Note: *Schizo & Parano (i.e. paranoid schizophrenia) are two 1997 books with collected interviews, including some by Anno and other Gainax staff, as well as several essays and edited by Kentaro Takekuma and Mitsunari Oizumi. It also includes several third-party essays. Some claim this book was written by Anno himself, but this is a misreporting from an English-speaking site, corrected by Takekuma in the Japanese source, but not present in the English article.*

Mitsunari Oizumi's Introduction to Schizo :

September, 1995. The Aum training facility at Suginami. A sermon being deivered by Fumihiro Joyu.

"At this moment I am researching anime. [The members of] Aum are the so-called 'Newtypes.' The children who watch anime are unconsciously choosing and envisioning the form of their own future. In the future, many people will come to possess psychic powers. Armageddon is coming."

This is what Fumihiro Joyu said.

On October 4, 1995, the anime "Neon Genesis Evangelion" began airing. It was a story of Armageddon.

You will know [the full details] once you read the following interview, but this [is a brief account] of how things came to pass. First of all, my (Oizumi's) wife, who was raising our one-year-old in Hitachi, Ibaraki prefecture, and endlessly checking anime videos [to see if they were suitable for a young child], became obsessed with Eva. Next, she made me get the [Eva] filmbook for her in Tokyo, and I became obsessed with Eva. (At this time Akata-kun - the editor of the magazine Quick Japan, put out by the publisher of this book - told me that if you're buying the filmbook, you're done for.) After the broadcast finished on March 27, 1996, Kentaro Takekuma-san, hearing of the series' reputation, watched the entire thing on video, and became obsessed with it.

Takekuma-san was incredible after that. He spent almost a whole day (I was there too, but...) persuading Akata-kun of the necessity of doing a special feature on Eva [for Quick Japan]. [Then,] at the Takekuma-residence, he held a great screening party that recounted the history of the makers of Eva, Gainax and Hideaki Anno, beginning with their University-era anime works, and finishing with Eva [itself]. He opened my eyes - as someone ignorant of the anime industry - to the history [of Anno and Gainax], and he got Akata-kun to agree to the special issue on Eva.

At the same time Takekuma-san privately contacted Mr. Anno, and laid the groundwork for him to accept the interview.

[A member of] the non-fiction industry, I spent almost all of 1995 gathering information on Aum (especially through interviews and direct experience of their spiritual training), while serializing "The Disappearance of the Mangaka" in Quick Japan; I was a complete stranger to the anime industry. On the other hand, Mr. Anno was someone who had lived his whole life in the anime industry. With the two of us having no point of contact at all aside from being absorbed in Eva, Takekuma-san splendidly served as a translator between the two of us, and exhibited a matchless capability as an interviewer as well. I want to express my gratitude to him in writing. More than anything, I want to express my sincere gratitude to Mr. Hideaki Anno for accepting this interview and opening himself up to us.

Oizumi: I myself have been engaged in gathering information on Aum since around January of last year. Since I had didn't know what kind of organization they were, in the end I joined them, and, collecting information the whole time on what kind of people were attracted by the pull of Shoko Asahara, put [my findings] into a book. When I first saw Evangelion last year, I was shocked, wondering if a show like this should be airing, since [the title] contained the same phrase as Aum's radio program [broadcast] from Russia, "Evangelion Tes Basileias."

Anno: A simultaneous occurrence. I didn't know anything at all [about the radio program].

Oizumi: So that made a strong impression on me. After that there was another thing, the images of a Kabbalistic design in the opening sequence. Asahara had also plunged into a variety of different religions, but he had not gone into Kabbalah (laughing). I relaxed a little because of that.

Takekuma: But it was [still] dangerous enough, since in its later period Aum had gone so far as to steal [elements from] Christianity.

Oizumi: Kabbalah is an esoteric form of Judaism, so it was marginal [to Aum's use of Christianity]. When I first watched Evangelion, I thought that it was based upon Kabbalistic thought.

Anno: That was quite a misconception (laughing).

Takekuma: I heard that the second half of the production of Eva was dreadful in terms of the scheduling...

Anno: That's true. We held out well, I think. I don't think that people outside [of the production] realize this, but it was a miracle that we held out as long as we did. To finish that schedule with so few people. Although [you could] also [say] we did it because we were an elite few. To do something like that, with so few people, in such a short amount of time - in this sense, we did very well. There were many points where I depended upon the passion or the mentality of the staff. But these are things that people outside [of the production] are unable to see. The great majority of people judge only the final result. From my perspective, we did everything that we were able to do. Of course, doing something like this is impossible for someone who won't shed their own blood. People who don't shed their own blood won't be able to understand it at a deep level.

Takekuma: A little while ago you described this sort of work as a service industry, but you carried out something like a betrayal of this [principle of] service (in abandoning the story); didn't you feel that to be a self-contradiction?

Anno: No, that was my service (laughing).

Takekuma: Of course (laughing).

Anno: It may not have looked like service, but it was service. It was service that couldn't be recognized [as such]. One aspect of it was, if [the audience was] going to be angry, then I was really going to make [them] angry. Rather than being angry about the [quality of] animation, it would be cleaner if they had a feeling that made them want to flip over the table in front of them.

Oizumi: My own wife fell splendidly into that [trap].

Takekuma: It was like the work triggered a psychological collapse (laughing).

Anno: I also [thought] it would be a topic of discussion, even after it was finished. A part of it was that, for me, providing that discussion would be [a form of] service. [An] unprecedented [service]. Working assiduously at it, we got that kind of ending. [?]

Oizumi: This has to do with the fact that you ended up spending all your money... From an economic standpoint, it's a well-known story that little money remains to be passed down to the animators, or those occupying the lowest positions [among the staff].

Anno: Right. [What they get] is not at all proportionate to the [amount of] content [they create]. All they get to compensate for that [insufficient amount of money] is something psychological. [I can] only have them be pleased with the fact, when they see the finished work, that it is interesting and they are glad to have worked on it. I could only arrange for them to receive a psychological [form of] remuneration. But that becomes a kind of pressure in its own way, because they may stop working on it if it becomes uninteresting. I always have to provide something interesting. It was a game played in earnest.

Takekuma: What did the other staff members say about the final two episodes?

Anno: There were some who were satisfied with it, and some who thought that it was acceptable.

Takekuma: So there wasn't anyone who was dissatisfied with it?

Anno: Hardly anyone. I didn't feel that I could do the final two episodes any other way. [The lack of dissatisfaction] also had to do with the fact that I said we would "retake" [the final two episodes].

Takekuma: If you [had said you] were unable to "retake" [the final two episodes], the reaction would probably have been a little bit different.

Oizumi: Takekuma-san, you yourself treated [the concept of] Armageddon in the story of "Child Planet," serialized in [the magazine] "Young Sunday."

Takekuma: To be honest, because of that, when I saw Eva, I thought, "I give up!" [And also that] we were of the same generation. I think there were similarities in [both of our] motivations. That was a story I thought of about three years ago.

Oizumi: It's the same case with Aum. It's like the same idea bursting forth at the same time from completely unconnected places.

Takekuma: Lacking an idea of [what it means] to be an adult, [we] have to become adults, but we don't know what kind of adult we should become. In this condition, having reached thirty-six years of age, it's disgraceful to say such a thing, but we have not actually discovered reality. Because of this, I felt that Eva, too, fell into a state of profound sadness. Eva is really the story of Shinji-kun becoming an adult.

Anno: That's the same thing as I [myself] becoming an adult. I'm often asked if Shinji-kun [represents] an old version of myself, but that's not the case. Shinji-kun is my current self (laughing). I act like a fourteen-year-old boy; I'm still childish. No matter how you look at it, in psychological terms, I'm [still] in the Oral Stage. A melancholic oral-dependent type. Well, this is a truth I can't deny; I can't do anything about it. I wanted to move forward from there, but the result was that I ended up regressing back to myself. A dead end.

Takekuma: Then in a certain sense the final episode of Eva is an unhappy ending.

Anno: Right, in a certain sense. If you take moving beyond that as being happy, then it's an unhappy ending. If you think it's fine, then it's a happy ending.

Takekuma: At first glance, it takes the form of a happy ending.

Anno: I made [the idea?] the title of the last song on the soundtrack CD. "Good, or Don't Be." OK, or don't live. Good or bad. [Or] is it both? I revealed a little bit of my feelings there.

However, I believe that we have stopped growing where we are and are going around in circles under a [kind of] moratorium, but one [reason] is that we have lost our [capacity for] modeling. There is nothing original in human beings. If I don't know Japanese at least, I can't communicate. Since my parents spoke this way, that's how I speak. If my parents spoke English I would speak English, even if I was in Japan. If my friends spoke Japanese, and I didn't know what [they were saying], then I would go over to speaking in Japanese. I can't invent the Japanese language myself. I'm only capable of doing things through imitation. At that time I begin to imitate my parents and siblings, those closest to me. I can either honor my parents and succeed them, or rebel and follow a different path from my parents. Either way, if I don't have a model, then I can do neither one.

No matter how much of a genius one is, there is something that awakes inspiration. If, like me, you look at nothing but manga and anime, when you have thought up something and created it, what you have thought up will only be something that you have forgotten; without question there will be some previous source for it. Then you will realize it, and recognize what it was, and feel a little bad. Since that was all you looked at, well, it was inevitable, because you are just unconsciously drawing out those things that have sedimented inside of you. No matter how much of a genius you are, if you are translating the emotions of seeing a [certain] flower into a song or a novel, if you were not really cognizant of that flower, you will not get the novel or the song. Human beings cannot create something out of nothing. With so much information flooding [us], we don't know what we should be modeling. Even if I don't know my classmate's birth date, I'll know on what day Momoe Yamaguchi was born (laughing). I'll know the minute [details of] an idol's profile, like her bust, waist, and hip measurements. It's a world, I think, where you feel closer to Momoe Yamaguchi than to your classmate. Characters on television have a stronger feeling of reality than your classmates who really exist. It's incredible, the awareness that the virtual is higher than the real. Growing up in such an environment, we aren't sure if things that are well done have been created or not. [?] When we get older, even if we recognize that those things are false, we take what the announcer on NHK news says to be true. The Japanese have a strong tendency in this direction.

Oizumi: About the complex you have because of your father's body... you said, for instance, in an interview with Animage that even when drawing a robot you're not satisfied until you've erased some part of it.

Anno: Probably I have an attachment towards deformity. I can't love [something] if it's not broken somewhere. I believe that's [due to] the influence of my father['s condition].

Oizumi: The Evas often got deformed as well (laughing).

Takekuma: Toji lost his leg. Why didn't he die there?

Anno: I couldn't kill him.

Takekuma: Of course.

Anno: No, um, I made a certain promise, though I think now I should have broken it. At the very begining, when [we] drew up the plan [for Eva], [I met] with the producer, from King Records, who told me, "I will approve the plan you submit, whatever it is, because I have faith in you. However, there will be two conditions. The first one is that you will remain with me for five years. You cannot, for example, do a film version with another [producer]. The additional condition is that you will not kill any children. The adults can die, but I don't want children dying." Because of that condition I couldn't kill [Toji].

Takekuma: There are people who have argued that Nerv is [a representation of] Studio Ghibli (laughing), but in truth Nerv is [a representation of] Gainax.

Anno: That's so. It's what you would call an amateur group.

Takekuma: You are projected into every one of the characters in your work, but you were in Gendo's position, right? The staff had to follow you anyway, even though [they] didn't know what [you were] thinking.

Anno: I'm in that position as far as my standing is concerned. As to whether I'm projecting that much [into him], I don't really think so. But he is certainly my shadow.

Takekuma: Speaking in terms of the drama, there is this enmity between parent and child, [but] the [actual] struggle [between them] remains unrealized.

Anno: Right. It's vague. I was saving it until the final episode, thinking I would do it then.

Oizumi: What I thought was intersting is that at the outset you kill all of the mothers. Was that a projection of something like your [own] maternal image?

Anno: Yeah.

Takekuma: For me, it was different. For me, it was my father who wasn't there. It's unusual, I think, [for people of] my generation to be confronting their fathers.

Anno: I'm not sure that it's a real father [that Gendo represents]. Well, not a father in the sense of a parent with a blood relation to his child, but more, I think, [in the sense of being] a representative of society or the system. That's why he has that expression.

Takekuma: So, he's kind of amorphous.

Anno: The angels are the same. I made them appear amorphous in that way because, for me, society is unclear, the enemy is unclear.

Takekuma: Gendo is [a representation of] the boundries or the pressure of society itself.

Anno: That might be it. Perhaps Gendo is [a representation of] society itself.

Anno: [Making the last two episodes] it felt like my brain kept on producing all these chemicals. When I saw episode 25 after first putting it together, I thought, “I'm a genius.” However, when I re-edited and re-watched it afterwards, I was crushed. It was no good at all. I was embarrassed my lack of ability. I apologize to the staff.

Takekuma: Well, but, the last scene in the final episode was quite something, where the screen cracks and everyone is applauding and congratulating the main character. Watching that, I felt like I was going crazy. It was like, how far are you going with this…?

Anno: Well, there were a lot of things I was thinking about there. The biggest reason [for that scene], I have no intention of revealing. The heart of it, I won’t tell anyone. The most crucial part of the reason why I made episode 26 like that - I still haven’t revealed that anywhere, including in [this magazine,] Quick Japan. That part at least, I won’t tell anyone.

Oizumi: You mean, some personal, formative experience you can’t tell anyone?

Anno: Something a bit more ideological. In these interviews for Quick Japan, we’ve only gone about as far as the inner moat [of the castle]… Well, that part, I’ll be taking to my grave.

Sadamoto: But I thought that the final two episodes were fine. I thought it was simply a matter of the connecting episode between episodes 24 and 25 being missing. That's why we're doing the original episode 25 (the remake version) now. I think it's just that that episode was missing. I saw the initial script. If the original episode 25 had been there, then there would have been a clear link leading up to the television versions of episodes 25 and 26. Just one episode was missing. So I thought [the ending] was fine.

Masayuki: We know that because we're the people who worked on [the series].

Sadamoto: So in my mind there's a clear link [bridging episode 24 and EoTV]. But the ordinary viewers, although they wanted to see the continuation of episode 24, it was omitted. So, they got mad at it.

Oizumi: That's completely right.

Sadamoto: They couldn't see the relation [between 24 and EoTV].

Tsurumaki: Well, it's because the original episode 25 script was completed [but not used].

Sadamoto: Because I've seen [that script], I thought, [watching EoTV], well, even this much is fine.

Sadamoto: I think that we expected the "grand finale" of the initial planning stages to be more conventional. In the finale, there was going to be a scene with a fight against angels on the surface of the moon. And then, after a number of years had passed, a message would be written on the moon's surface. We discussed something like that, something along the lines of "Gunbuster."

Sadamoto: The truth is that in the initial planning stages, there was a draft outline of the final episode. There were lines in it that were exactly the same as "Nadia." Even the lines were the same - what were the lines?

Sato: "Live!" and so on.

Sadamoto: Right, the father says "live!" and so forth. It was something like that.

Sadamoto: (Kotono Mistuishi) cried reading a script, for example. When Anno-san heard that - guts pose! (laughing)

Masayuki: What episode was that?

Sadamoto: 25.

Takekuma: Misato's voice actress cried reading the script?

Sadamoto: So Anno did a guts pose. The supervisor of the manga also cried [reading it], and when Anno heard that, he did another guts pose (laughing). He was victorious, because two members of society had been reduced to tears. However, after it was finished, people told him various things, and he went into a state of collapse. What happened to the guts pose? (laughing)

Masayuki: When he was making episode 25 he was saying, "I'm a genius." Then after it had broadcast, he came out of his room looking dazed. "Why did I make such a strange thing?" (laughing)

Sato: The last episode was the same, wasn't it?

Masayuki: Well, he didn't say anything about the last episode. Just with episode 25, he seemed to be extremely pleased with it. Then when he saw the broadcast, it was like, "I'm an idiot..." (laughing)

Sato: Afterwards he was looking at the reactions on message boards from a distance (laughing). Although he was saying he was going to ignore them, he was still looking out of the corner of his eye at the monitor. “I’m probably not going to look….” he said. “Right, I’m not going to look.”

Sadamoto: But I thought that the final two episodes were fine. I thought it was simply a matter of the connecting episode between episodes 24 and 25 being missing. That’s why we’re doing the original episode 25 (the remake version) now. I think it’s just that that episode was missing. I saw the initial script. If the original episode 25 had been there, then there would have been a clear link leading up to the television versions of episodes 25 and 26. Just one episode was missing. So I thought [the ending] was fine.

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Tsurumaki: Well, it’s because the original episode 25 script was completed [but not used].

Sadamoto: Because I’ve seen [that script], I thought, [watching the ending], well, even this much is fine.

Oizumi: Since you talked about it [in the previous interview], I recently read Ryu Murakami’s “All Men are Consumable Goods.” Afterwards I met a woman who was a fan of Ryu Murakami. When we discussed what [women] see in [his works], in the end, [it has to do with the fact that] women want to be revered as women. It seems [his works are] very satisfying on that account.

Anno: Ah, I imagine so. He’s a feminist, Ryu Murakami.

Oizumi: I know. So, she said, it brightens her mood when she reads his works.

Anno: On the other hand I often hear of men getting angry when they read “All Men are Consumable Goods.” I feel, basically, that people getting angry at that resembles (fans) hearing what I say [in interviews] and getting angry [at me]. I thought that it was somehow something similar, since Ryu Murukami is a pathetic person as well.

Oizumi: [A similar] patheticness.

Anno: Yeah. In the sequel to “The World Five Minutes From Now” (“Hyuga Virus”), which just came out, we see the methodology of that patheticness, which is good. In Ryu Murakami’s previous novels, he occupies the position of God. In “The Fascism of Love and Illusion,” [he is] the dictator, Toji. He projects himself into a man of absolute strength. Taking into account the fact that he cannot maintain himself [psychologically] if he abandons this sort of conviction, it’s pathetic, [and therefore] good. However, I find in “Hyuga Virus,” with the protagonist, [Murakami] didn’t just depict strength, but also the weakness of people who seek to be strong. So Ryu Murakami finally recognized himself, and stood in his own position. He was honest, I thought.

Oizumi: So you felt that there were points in common between the two of you.

Anno: The fact that [he] sells that patheticness, well, there is a similar atmosphere, I like to think.

Anno: "Ai to Gensou no Fascism." I like "Zero" [from that novel]. He is a highly dependent personality. I think Ryu Murakami and I are the same [as Zero]: empty people. Really pathetic people.

Takekuma: His writing style is very stylish. [His books are] the type you keep reading because of the style.

Anno: In the end, there's nothing else. It's pathetic people trying to maintain themselves, living dependently on women.

Takekuma: So, the character Zero is Murakami's own self-projection.

Anno: He remains unable to reject Zero. That also reveals a pathetic quality; the man himself aims at the opposite, but in the end part of his true feelings come out through Zero. It's an amazingly good novel. I think Murakami is also an "oral stage" dependent type. He is overly fixated on the mother, and overly fixated on women. He is also fixated on the idea of crying into a woman's chest. Finally, he is always thinking of doing away with his father. I think it's a story of the Oedipus Complex.

Takekuma: There's a desire to destroy the system [in Murakami's work].

Anno: Yes. It's a story of the Oedipus Complex, where one kills one's father and violates one's mother. However, when I started [Eva], I thought the same [way]. Because it [was] a story where Shinji kills his father and steals his mother from him.

Takekuma: A mother who has become a giant (laughs).

Anno: There was this replacement by a robot, so the original mother is the robot, but then there is a mother of the same age, Rei Ayanami, by [Shinji's] side. [She is] also by the side of the real father. There is also another father there, Adam, who governs the overall course of events. An Oedipus Complex within these multiple structures; that's what I wanted to do. "Ai to Genso no Fascism." I think there are ideological elements that are the same as those in the novel. [...] The thing that most moved me was [the fact that] when the protagonist, Toji Suzuhara, attempted to kill the current Prime Minister, he felt [the Prime Minister] was very much like a father. He thinks, I will kill my father, and violate my mother, Japan. So, he goes on to destroy Japan. I really like that passage. I like that Ryu Murakami's real feelings come out there. The novel itself is extremely boring, however (laughs).

Takekuma: I see. That’s interesting. There were places where it didn’t seem that way at all.

Anno: Hmm. One reason was that I made a miscalculation. Episode six was too soon.

Takekuma: Episode six was too soon? Ah, the decisive battle in Tokyo-3. There was a level of intensity there like that of a final episode.

Anno: When creating the characters for Eva - in the case of Asuka, [when I had] the lines “Anta Baka!?” and “Chance…”, I thought, ah, this is going to work. In the case of Rei, it was the line in episode six: “You won’t die. I will protect you.” And also at the end, when Rei says, “I don’t know what kind of expression I should have at a time like this,” and Shinji says, “I think you should smile,” and Rei smiles. I felt like, ah, this is going to work. At those two points, Rei’s character was created. However, when I thought about it afterwards, I cursed. I thought, in short, that if she has [already] communicated with Shinji there, then isn’t she over with? At that moment, Rei, for me, was finished, all at once.

Takekuma: You had finished depicting her.

Anno: Right. When she smiled, she was already finished with, this character.

Takekuma: I understand. Because of that, it feels like the human relationships take a step backwards afterwards.

Anno: Yeah. It was the same as in Tsuburaya’s “Return of Ultraman.” [Just] when the relationship between [Hideki] Go and MAT improves, and you think [he] will get on well with other people, then next week things begin again from [a position of] estrangement. At that point something emerges of my mistrust or fear of communication with others.

Oizumi: When I look at Rei Ayanami, I’m reminded of the girls in Aum. In short, they’re all dependent upon their Guru, Asahara.

Takekuma: [She devotes herself] wholeheartedly, with a heart like a hard shell.

Oizumi: Exactly. And, on the topic of substitutions, can we think of Rei Ayanami as being a person like your mother?

Anno: That’s not quite right.

Takekuma: There’s also nothing like the image of a girl you previously dated [in her], right?

Anno: No. Well, Rei is probably [the character] closest to my deep psyche. I don’t really understand her. … The truth is, I have no emotional attachment to her at all.

Takekuma: Huh? Is that right?

Anno: Yeah. I have no emotional attachment to her. Well, Nobita-san wrote [about her] as being a symbol of schizophrenia. There were parts where that was actually what I wanted to do [with her].

Takekuma: But she is the character best received by the fans in the outside world. Even I was drawn in by Rei at the beginning.

Oizumi: That’s right. Megumi Hayashibara’s voice was also incredible.

Anno: But Rei is [the character] I least understand. In addition, I’m not really that interested in her. There were parts where that’s what I was consciously doing, actively trying to put aside my presuppositions, trying to bring out the most primitive, the most core, the purest parts within me.

Oizumi: So Rei is perhaps [something] embedded in your unconscious [that] can’t be expressed in words.

Anno: Even in the midst of making Eva, I suddenly realized I had forgotten her. Her very existence. In episode seven, I remembered, and added a single shot with Rei. I had no emotional attachment to her at all. I think that was fine, because she didn’t appear in episode eight, not even for a single shot.

Anno: [For human beings?], there is no 'original.' ... When those like me, who don't watch anything but anime and manga, suddenly hit upon something, what we discovered will only be something within us we forgot about, there will necessarily be some original [elsewhere]. ... I feel a bit bad [about it].

Anno: Fundamentally, Eva is just my life copied out onto film. I'm [still] alive, so the story hasn't finished.

Anno: The characters of 'Eva' are all composite personalities based around my own personality.

Shinji-kun is the current me

Anno: I think that [one?] has to be more cognizant of that. The fact that we have nothing.

I think [Murakami] is the same as me, an empty person.

Anno: If we assume that an 'original' exists, it's nothing but my life. ... I can't deny that everything else may be counterfeit.

Oizumi: I find that both Anno-san and Takekuma-san [produce] incredibly self-referential works.

Takekuma: Isn’t that the tendency of our generation?

Anno: Well, we want to understand ourselves.

Takekuma: We have indefinite selves without models or norms, so we refer back to our selves [in our works].

Anno: Society is indefinite as well. There are countless indefinite aspects [of our situation]. That indefiniteness disgusts me. Everyone and everything - including anime fans, and even Aum - is hazy and uncertain. It’s the society that sets those values. Even Aum was something hazy and uncertain prior to the incident.

Oizumi: [As part of my research [Oizumi wrote one of the early & still-cited works on Aum]] I’m a member of Aum now, and even now it’s extraordinarily indefinite. Every member is different. [It’s composed of] a variety of different people, but the society has declared it to be this [particular sort of] organization.

Anno: Anime fans and the anime industry are also indefinite. In a manner of speaking all of Japan is indefinite. I hated this, and I wanted to construct a barrier between myself and society. Expressing it in terms of the show, it was an “AT Field,” a pattern [of behavior] where I would tear apart or reject anything that crossed the boundary line between myself and others. Perhaps [that was the] “barrier of the heart.”

Anno: Another [major influence] was the seventh volume of the Nausicaa manga.

Takekuma: That [volume] is incredible. It reversed all the values [that had been in place].

Anno: I felt like it was the same as what I [was doing]. After that I couldn’t help but make [the work into] Nausicaa, to treat the same themes as the seventh volume of Nausicaa.

Oizumi: Nausicaa was unable to live as one of the ancients.

Anno: She rejected coexistence [with them]. She bloodied her hands so that her own people would survive. That was good. This karmic punishment that required [her] to destroy [them] with the abhorred fire of the God Warriors - that was good (laughing). [Good] because the true views of Hayao Miyazaki were expressed, and there, at least, he took off his underwear [and showed himself naked]. In the manga he took off his underwear, and his penis was erect (laughing). I am hoping that he will do the same in Princess Mononoke.

Takekuma: There are people who will not rest satisfied with works [of fiction], but feel they must change reality. Is there something within you that is “Asahara-like,” or are you conscious of something like a desire to change reality?

Anno: I think so.

Oiziumi: Is it that you are trying to do this through the production of anime?

Anno: Mmm. Right. To an extent I was also trying to change the consciousness of the anime industry itself. However, it seems to have been a failure.

Takekuma: Do you mean that people in the industry regard Eva as having been an exceptional case?

Anno: That’s right. [They see] (Gainax) as an exception. So they don’t take [us] as one of their own. And that’s given rise to jealousy, abuse, and slander - to something like an inferiority complex. But there were a few people [on our side]. There were certainly people who tried to understand what it is we were doing, or who understood fairly well. I was happy about that. There were [such] people both in the industry and among the fans. So there was value in doing it, I think.

Takekuma: So you’re not in despair.

Anno: I do feel despair, but that’s where [you] begin from. Everything begins out of despair. In the words of Yukio Mishima, “love is born only out of despair”; “true reformers do not speak of [their] despair.” I think that might be the case.

Takekuma: Have you always felt something like a sense of isolation [from others]?

Anno: A sense of isolation? Well, I wasn’t really aware [of what I was feeling]. It’s probably that I wasn’t all that interested in [other] human beings.

Takekuma: It sounds strange to speak of depersonalization disorder, but there was no reality in your actual relationships with other human beings.

Anno: My actual… well… I probably [just] wasn’t interested in anything other than myself.

Takekuma: Something like narcissism[, then].

Anno: Well, something like that, I think. In the end it was something like not having much interest in the things around me, including my family. The truth was I probably had no [interest]. I didn’t really know [why] myself.

Takekuma: Do you dislike people?

Anno: Umm. Well, before people, I dislike living things. I don’t like animals either. The fact that I don’t eat meat or fish is probably also due to disliking [living things]. I think, how can I eat something so disgusting? [Though] that’s still not a clear answer [to the question].

Oizumi: What about plants?

Anno: Well, I dislike [plants] too. Really.

Takekuma: So, you gravitate towards mecha, for example.

Anno: Well, I think that’s why I like mecha.

Takekuma: Have you been troubled by your dislike for human beings, or your inability to draw images of living things?

Anno: Umm… It causes difficulties, since I can’t do my job [because of it]. Since I have no interest in human beings, of course the hardest thing [for me to do is create] a human drama.

Takekuma: But that’s what you tried to do in Eva, isn’t it?

Anno: I tried, but I was completely unable to do it. I didn’t have the capability. Pathetic, as usual.

Oizumi: You think that you were unable to do it, but others around you, who get worked up with enthusiasm [thinking] about the characters, would be surprised.

Anno: It's a matter of comparison, I think.

Oziumi: Ah, I see. You mean that other works do even worse (laughing).

Anno: Yeah. Because everyone just says, "I'm making a human drama." I think, how can they say that?

Takekuma: You're saying, it's not that easy.

Anno: A human drama isn't something you can make that easily. You're depicting other people, people you don't understand at all. On top of that, you also have to depict the relationships between them. I don't think it's easy. There do exist "human dramas" as patterns: you have typical characters, and [you know that] if they do such-and-such a thing, such-and-such will result; but those are false articles. Well, they are good in their own way, as an artificial world you can watch without concern. For me, this time, [that sort of thing] was no good. [Neither myself] nor the staff would have been satisfied with that level [of work]. Well, in the end, no matter how much I considered it I was unable to do it, so I had no choice but to project myself into the drama. So it only seems to be a human drama.

Takekuma: Ah, that's what you meant by saying, "all the characters in Eva are me, myself."

Anno: It's non-fiction, what I'm making now. It would be completely impossible for me to do it as fiction. I don't have that kind of ability. I see arrogance in those who think that they could easily create such a work. Arrogance, or else a lack of understanding. Well, in reality Eva is closer to being a documentary than a drama.

Takekuma: What happened with [the sex scene] (in episode 20)?

Otsuki: I didn't see it when it aired (laughing). I saw it for the first time the other day with Anno-san, as part of some video being edited. "Anno-san," I said, "I would of course have stopped you if I had known about this" (laughing loudly).

Takekuma: So, you didn't interfere at all in the work.

Otsuki: I don't like [involving myself in the creative aspect], so all the conversations [I had] concerning the settei or the contents [of the work] were mostly just at the outset. After it started airing I had no consultations [with Anno about the content] at all; those were exclusively with Tatsunoko's Ueda-san. When Anno-san met with me, he was basically rage incarnate. "The sakuga isn't finished," and so on, [complaining about] this thing and that. And about love (laughing). All kinds of things like that. My role was to listen to his complaints. We also had theoretical or philosophical conversations, about the state of society and so on. In the conversations between the two of us, not even the first syllable of the word "Eva" was pronounced. On the contrary, I felt [that Anno] didn't want to talk about Eva. [At least] when he was with someone like me.

Takekuma: When he was in conversation with you.

Otsuki: Yeah. Ueda-san was doing it for me, so I [just] decided to stop discussing Eva [with Anno] altogether. Because of that, even now, to be honest - and I have to apologize before everyone for this - I have hardly seen anything [of Eva] from about episode ten to episode nineteen or so. Yesterday, one of the young people working for me was making a promotional TV spot for Eva, and [in the footage he was using] the blue Evangelion was throwing a spear at an angel in the heavens. It was amazing, I thought. I saw it for the first time yesterday (laughing).

Oizumi: Yesterday? That's a famous scene! (laughing)

Otsuki: It went *whoosh* through the air. And then I still haven't seen the black Evangelion.

Sato (stunned): That [episode] is already out on LaserDisc. It went on sale last month.

Sadamoto: In the end [the usage of the Dead Sea Scrolls and so on in Eva] is an aftereffect from Nadia. In the final episode there is a scene where Gargoyle, the villain, comes into contact with the light [from the Blue Water] and turns into a pillar of salt. So, in the initial proposal for Eva, the huge explosion that was caused in Antarctica [in the final series] was [instead] an explosion at the Dead Sea.

Tsurumaki: The "Dead Sea Evaporation Incident."

Sadamoto: It was the "Dead Sea Evaporation Incident," in the initial proposal. So it was connecting up with the world view of Nadia. I believe that Anno-san was thinking about that.

Sato: [Eva taking place] in a parallel [world].

Takekuma: [Eva would have been] something like a continuation of Nadia, in actuality.

Tsurumaki: Perhaps, at one point, that was the intention. I wonder if [Anno] made [things] intending a world where, for example, there would be accounts preserved of the appearance of UFOs in Paris at the end of the 19th century.

Sadamoto: I believe that [Anno] was thinking of something like that at the beginning. I think [it was going to be] a bit more of a manga-esque world.

[Editor's Note on Gargoyle: The leader of an organization appearing in Nadia, Neo-Atlantis, which aims to rule the world. Director Anno said at the time that [this character is where] his personality comes out the most. [Gargoyle's] voice actor, Motomu Kiyokawa, who played a number of villains in tokusatsu works, is much admired by the director.]

Sadamoto: [I first met him when] I worked part-time drawing genga for the Macross television series as a University student. I would help out a little in between attending school. So I think the first [encounter] was when I caught sight of Anno-san at Artland. There was a unit called the "Mecha Squad," which included (Ichiro) Itano-san among its members, who were all living there [at Artland] (laughing). The story would take some time to recount

Oizumi: No, please tell it at length.

Sadamoto: I was attending the manga studies program at the Tokyo University of Art and Design. Mahiro Maeda was a student there, and he invited me to work together with him on Macross. When Maeda was in high school, (Takami) Akai-san had been an older student [at his school], and [Akai's later] classmates at the Osaka University of Arts were Hiroyuki Yamaga and Hideaki Anno. In the beginning those three were all working on Macross. Akai-san quickly gave up on it and returned to Osaka, but Yamaga-san and Anno-san remained behind at Artland and helped out with Macross. Yamaga-san was placed in charge of directing an episode for the first time with episode nine…

Sato: The storyboards as well?

Sadamoto: Yeah, he ended up doing the storyboards and the direction, and [saw] he didn't have enough people. Yamaga-san began searching for talented people in Tokyo, and when he asked Akai-san about it, [Akai] told him to use [an old] schoolmate of his in the manga studies program at the Tokyo University of Art and Design. So Mahiro Maeda, seeming not to want to go by himself, invited me to go with him. I had an interest in animation, so I assisted [on Macross] for about a year. During that period, I would from time to time catch sight of Anno-san. [I noticed,] "there is this tall fellow who sometimes walks around in his bare feet" (laughing).

Takekuma: At that time, he didn't give off a sense that you could approach him very easily, right?

Sadamoto: I didn't approach him. Anno-san, he was always talking to himself in a loud voice. You could understand what he was saying even from far away. You would hear this loud voice from the other side of the hallway: "I've got it! The timing of Itano's explosions - !" [the Itano circus] (laughing loudly)

Sato: That's the same as he is now.

Sadamoto: He would say "I've got it!" and suddenly begin drawing, and go to (Shojo) Kawamori-san, or some other director - my own immediate [supervising] director was Fumihiko Takayama-san - he would go to Takayama-san and explain the drawing in minute detail, saying how many frames it should take, and how things were to be arranged, and how it would disappear. So, when, seeing his intensity, I wondered who he was, Mahiro Maeda told me "That's Anno-san; he worked on Daicon III." "Ah, I see," I thought. "He loves to draw mecha."

Anno: I understood the moment Toji [Suzuhara] felt contempt for his staff. I once had such a moment myself. At that point, I felt like for the first time I understood the position of a director. As I am in the position of both producer and director, my staff have to depend on me. That's an inevitable part of the system. There's no other person who can place themselves in my position. Inevitably, a producer/director is a dictator, but [being a dictator] is its own kind of isolation.

Oizumi: At that point Zero alone is in the same position, and [Toji] feels a bond with him.

Anno: Right. To those on the outside, it looks like an illusion, but when it comes down to it I believe that happiness itself is an illusion. Human beings cannot escape from their solitude. All they can do is forget it. At that moment [of forgetfulness], they will be happy. That's my recent conclusion. In order [to forget], you can watch anime, or sleep with a girl, and if you can escape from your loneliness while doing it, then perhaps you will be happy. If, when I get totally drunk, I feel like I am not alone, that's an illusion, but it's happiness.

It's a work that mirrors the self of each and every person that watches it. That's because [the show contains] an excessive amount of information, and the projections of the viewers simply return to them. For each person, the appeal [of the show] is also different.

Oizumi: My wife loves Ritsuko Akagi. At times, she says similar things to her and if I mention the resemblance she becomes elated. "It's tough having a fastidious nature", for example.

Takekuma: In the end I was surprised when she was revealed to be Gendo's lover. What's good about old man like him?

Anno: Hmm, I wonder what it is indeed.

Takekuma: His wife Ikari Yui also says things like "but he also has a cute side", doesn't she?

Oizumi: That became a basis for so many gags.

Anno: I wonder what's good about him. Hmm. Well, on one hand, there is something. Even saying that is unseemly.

Takekuma: To sum it up, isn't this the case with Anno too, right? (laugh)

Anno: Well, that is partly the case.

Takekuma: Isn't the gist here "though he is this kind of person, he also has a cute side"?

Anno: Maybe it's about penis. (laugh) My penis is the only cute part of me. "Oh my, how tiny!" and the like.

Takekuma: Do you lack confidence that badly?

Anno: I lack a penis.

Takekuma: It's not like I have much to talk about either. (laugh)

Oizumi: What if your sizes match. This is becoming terrible. (laugh)

Anno: Well, I guess mine would be about the average size for Japanese. Slightly smaller than average.

Oizumi: However, being too big is also a problem. My friend has one like a beer bottle, and prostitutes hate it.

Anno: That is also a tragedy in its own way.

Oizumi: It truly is a tragedy.

Anno: Well, if you're small and hear "oh, it's already in?" the shock will last a lifetime.

Takekuma: But women don't really care that much, do they? In reality.

Oizumi: Well how are you hung, Oizumi? (laugh)

Takekuma: This is not a brag but I have a phimosis. (laugh) Reversely, I guess people who fixate on breast size care about boobs being small or big, but I don't really mind the size much.

Oizumi: I can't stand big boobs. How about you, Anno? In terms of preferences.

Anno: Hmm, well, small ones are no good. Too big is no good either. There's a lot Giant Tits manga out there, right. That's completely out of question. They don't even look like breasts anymore.

Takekuma: It's a world of cows or the like.

Anno: Well no, it's better to have some rather than none at all but I do wonder if having too much is good either.

Oizumi: Speaking for myself, Misato and the like might be slightly too big.

Takekuma: Misato, what is up with her sexy body? Especially with those eating habits and she's already 3X years old, right?

Anno: But her boobs have started to sag. Even Misato has lost resilience of her skin.

Additional excerpts

These have been collected from mentions in a variety of articles translated by Riki, here: [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] They are in no particular order.

Hideaki Anno: Geeks are very protective of their own world. That's their own world. It's difficult to tell someone like that to look out for the world. If they become tainted by the world, they are no longer geeks. So they stick to their own world. (When I see what fans say and do) I feel like I'm looking at myself, and that makes me say things that are offensive. (Parano)

Hideaki Anno: There is no such thing as a winning anime. There are only animations that have won by chance. Winning is a coincidence, losing is inevitable, as the saying goes. It's just a coincidence. If this had happened two years ago, it wouldn't have worked, and it won't work two years later either. (Parano)

"There are people who read too much into things that I didn't intend and assume that it must be this way. I think their guesses are wrong, though." (Schizo)

"A lot of people are concerned about consistency in the story, but as my wife [Moyoco Anno] says, there are a lot of things in the world that are just extremely difficult to understand or stupid and unreasonable." - **Moyoco Anno and Hideaki Anno while watching "The Nutcracker" in the August 11, 2014 issue of AERA.**

In "Schizo Evangelion," Anno stated that he once stood on the roof of GAINAX to see if he could actually jump off the roof because of his suicidal thoughts. In "Parano Evangelion," character designer Yoshiyuki Sadamoto and animator Masayuki teased, "I think it's just a trick of his (laughs)," and "We shouldn't think he's having such a hard time (laughs).

Anno: "What I'm working on now is non-fiction, and it would be impossible for me to do this in fiction. I don't have that kind of talent. I feel arrogant when people think it's easy to do such things. They are arrogant, or they don't know what they are talking about. Well, "Eva" is actually more like a documentary than a drama. (Parano)

"In the end, I think we can only do collages. There's no way around it. If there is an original, it's only my life. I am the only one who has my life." (Schizo)

"GAINAX has suddenly become rich, and they are distributing money" (Parano).

Hiroyuki Yamaga: May 1998 issue of "Evangelion"

- Excerpt from May 1998 issue of "Evangelion" magazine
- Source http://eva.onegeek.org/pipermail/evangelion/2006-September/003693.html

On Anno's severe depression, his "crisis of the soul," as a motive in the development of Evangelion.

YAMAGA: Well, I think Anno may have appeared in the Japanese media as you suggest; he's made comments about wanting to die, and so forth, but at least from my perspective, things were never as serious as they appeared in the press. [LAUGHS]

On the reasons for use of Judeo-Christian symbology in Eva

YAMAGA: I don't know exactly why. I suspect that Mr. Anno may have read some book on it, and there was some thoughts he wanted to express on it. I personally am glad that, rather than Christianity, he didn't express some obscure Buddhist theme, because then it would have been linked more with Aum Shinri Kyo. [LAUGHS]

On whether Anno and Yamaga are fans of David Lynch, and whether Anno is "the Kurt Cobain of anime."

YAMAGA: As far as Mr. Anno committing suicide or anything like that [LAUGHS], I'm not really sure how to say this, but, while sometimes he might seem very emotional, when you get to know him, he doesn't come off like that at all. [LAUGHS] As far as David Lynch is concerned, I don't dislike David Lynch, but on the other hand, he's not someone I'm a huge fan of, either. As far as Anno, there have been people who have called Evangelion the anime equivalent of Twin Peaks. [LAUGHS]

Interview with Yoshiyuki Sadamoto, Animerica Vol. 6, No. 8

- Article printed in Animerica Vol. 6, No. 8 in 1998.
- Source: http://eva.onegeek.org/pipermail/oldeva/1999-January/024322.html

ANIMERICA: When did you first decide to become a manga artist?

Sadamoto: Right about the time I was in elementary school and middle school, Mazinger Z by Go Nagai, and Leiji Matsumoto's Battlefield manga series were just coming out. About that time I thought it might be nice to become a manga artist.

ANIMERICA: How did you go about designing the characters for The Wings of Honneamise? Did you use real people as reference?

Sadamoto: I designed them from several meetings with the director, Yamaga. Basically, I drew faces that look similar to my friends, but some of the characters were designed using actors as reference. For example, Shirotsugu was designed using Robin Williams (The World According to Garp) and Treat Williams (Hair) as reference, and the director of the Space Force was based on Lee Van Cleef.

ANIMERICA: How did you come up with the unique designs for the clothing and uniforms of Honneamise?

Sadamoto: As you can see in animation and manga, Japanese typically look on Western designs as otherworldly. So to avoid that stereotype, I tried to capture the essence of the oriental world, such as China or India.

ANIMERICA: What were your influences during the time you designed characters for Nadia?

Sadamoto: The basic direction was toward a Jules Verne (20,000 Leagues Under the Sea) style, so I looked toward Disney's movie and a television special on the Wright Brothers for inspiration. However, I didn't want my designs to be confused with Hayao Miyazaki's Castle in the Sky: Laputa.

ANIMERICA: Since Nadia was set in the 19th century, were there any particular impressions you wanted to leave the audience with?

Sadamoto: Of course we were trying for an element of nostalgia, but since this was a world within a dream, we wanted to make sure the audience didn't concentrate too much on realism. We wanted to leave the impression of a world where anything could happen.

ANIMERICA: What made you decide to draw the Evangelion manga?

Sadamoto: It's hard to put into words. All can say is I had a desire to draw it.

ANIMERICA: How did you come up with the characters for Evangelion? Did you design them with actual people in mind?

Sadamoto: It half feels like God came down and guided my right hand. There were some television dramas and specials I used for reference, but mainly I designed them according to my individual preferences.

ANIMERICA: While you were drawing the battle scenes, were there things you noticed, things that were particularly difficult, or things that were particularly interesting?

Sadamoto: I think the battle scenes in the comic can't hold a candle to the scenes in the animation. With that in mind, I made it my motto to make the battle scenes as easy to understand as possible. My heart's desire is to have the time to add more pages to those scenes.

ANIMERICA: How many people are on your production staff? Are the duties clearly divided, like they are with American comics? And how long does it take to turn out one comic installment?

Sadamoto: I use two or three assistants to lay down the screentone, and recently, I've drawn quite a few rough backgrounds and given them to assistants to fill in details. Including the story and pencils, it usually takes about three weeks for one story. Unlike American comics, I do all the basic parts of the comic myself.

ANIMERICA: Why do you think Evangelion has become such a record-breaking hit?

Sadamoto: I think it's a combination of many factors, but simply put, it stumbled upon what the era was looking for. That about sums up my impression.

ANIMERICA: What made its popularity different from that of other productions?

Sadamoto: There's the anime mania; it even drew in adults who would normally never watch an animated show.

ANIMERICA: It's popular in America also. What do you think is the basis of that popularity? And if you have the feeling that people in other countries would be enthusiastic about it also, could you please tell us why?

Sadamoto: I thought only the Japanese would be keyed in to this story. If it's true that it has become popular in many countries, then it means that the whole world feels the same disease of the soul. This isn't something we should be happy about. [LAUGHS]

ANIMERICA: Who is your favorite character? Which character do you have the most fun drawing? Who is the hardest to draw, and why is this so?

Sadamoto: The female characters are the most fun. The main character, Shinji, with his subtle expressions, is the most difficult.

ANIMERICA: Do you like drawing cute animal characters, such as Evangelion's Pen-Pen the penguin or Nadia's lion cub King?

Sadamoto: I love it. But when I'm designing them, I'm actually selling you on the humanity of the pet. More than the cute exterior, I find the essence of the character to be the most important.

ANIMERICA: How are you presently involved with the new game/manga/animation project Blue Uru?

Sadamoto: Presently, I'm working on the game.

ANIMERICA: I've heard your wife is also a manga artist. How are your styles different?

Sadamoto: We're completely different, but I find that I've become somewhat influenced by her tastes as a woman's comic artist. She is very helpful when checking on my n?mu (full-size pencil layouts with dialogue included).

ANIMERICA: You and your wife have also collaborated on projects together. Could you tell us some of the good and bad points of that kind of working relationship?

Sadamoto: Those individual points that could never have come from me are both the best and worst points of collaboration, in comics or animation.

ANIMERICA: Can you tell us what new projects are in the works and what kind of vision you have for the future?

Sadamoto: I really haven't thought of projects that I would do purely on an individual level. I'm involved in Blue Uru and other Gainax productions. I hope you'll enjoy them.

ANIMERICA: As you're both an animator and a character designer - which profession do you prefer?

Sadamoto: I like both, but the work of character designer seems to fit my personality better.

ANIMERICA: What would you say is your fondest memory of working in animation?

Sadamoto: There are so many that I can't pick just one, but I'd say it's all the people I've met and all the strange foreign countries I was able to see while researching projects.

ANIMERICA: How do you spend your days off?

Sadamoto: I tinker with motorcycles or cars, go riding, build models, play with my kids, or when nothing is pressing, I just do nothing.

ANIMERICA: You mentioned motorcycles and cars. What kinds have you ridden in? Do you have any fond memories or ambitions regarding them?

Sadamoto: I'm in love with Italian cars, but because of short availability, presently I have only two English Lotuses and one French Citroen. Basically, I like foreign cars because I feel that through them, I can get an understanding of foreign cultures.

ANIMERICA: Do you have any advice for your American fans who might want to become manga artists?

Sadamoto: I'd say more than the desire to become a manga artist, figure out what you would like to say and pay attention to that. Remember that manga is only one medium in which to present your ideas, and put your best effort into it.

ANIMERICA: Do you have any messages for your English-speaking fans?

Sadamoto: Thank you for following the Gainax productions up until now, and I'll be working on more projects in the future, so I hope I can continue to count on your support!

Hideaki Anno in Top Runner (2004)

- This is a rough transcript of an interview with Hideaki Anno, which is aired on May 17, 2004.
- Translation: Riki
- Source: https://www.patreon.com/posts/48728245

Top Runner

A talk show aired on NHK.

Speakers

Manami Honjo, Program Host, Actress

Shinji Takeda, Program Host, Actor

Hideaki Anno, Program Guest

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Narration: Tonight, film director Hideaki Anno appears on this show. Director Anno, who is active in animation and live-action beyond genres, talks about the secrets of his creation and his passionate heart.

Honjo: Anno, you have plump ears(*2), don't you?

- 2) are considered to bring good luck and wealth in Japan.

Takeda: Yes, they are.

Anno: Thank you very much. But I'm not very rich, am I?

Honjo: Is that so?

Honjo: That's a very chic fashion, I like it. Actually, it's not my first time to meet you, is it?

Anno: No, it's not.

Honjo: Oh you remember.

Anno: Sure.

Honjo: We were seated across from each other at a year-end party for a manga artist named Tori Miki.

Anno: Yes, you gave me a telephone card(*3).

- 3) a credit card-size plastic or paper card, used to pay for telephone services. (Wikipedia)

Honjo: Yes, I did.

Takeda: Wait a minute, a telephone card?

Anno: I received two telephone cards of her wearing swimsuits.

Takeda: Seriously? (To Anno) Can I have one of them?

Honjo: No, no, no. I can't give you that.

Anno: I'm keeping them for myself.

Honjo: Thank you very much. Takeda, you have actually met him in the past too, haven't you?

Takeda: That's right. We were in the same movie. We were co-stars.

Anno: Yes.

Honjo: You participated as an actor, didn't you? Of course.

Anno Yes, I played an actor. I became an actor.

Honjo: Do you do a lot of work as an actor?

Anno: Only Mr. Ishii has used me as an actor. I've played an actor in two of his movies in a row.

Honjo: That's great.

Anno: I think I'm going to be one of the regular actors for his movies.

Honjo: That's cool.

Honjo: It seems that we've been offering to have you appear on this program for quite some time, but you've been refusing for a long time, and now you're finally here.

Anno: Yes. I had no choice but to come.

Honjo: Is that so?

Anno: I was wondering why I was appearing in a program titled 'Top Runner' if I wasn't the top runner or anything.

Honjo: Don't be modest.

Anno: I thought I didn't want to appear on the show.

Honjo: But you are always at the top of this field.

Anno: It's not that I'm on top. There are a lot of people who are better than me. I'm just so far behind that it looks like I'm on top.

Honjo: Really.

Anno: Yes that's how I feel.

Takeda: Wow, can I use that? If someone gives me a complement somewhere for next time, I'll say, 'Please don't say that. I'm just so far behind that it looks like I'm on top.

Honjo: Seriously?

Takeda: It's cool, isn't it?

Meet Anno Hideaki

Narration: Today's guest is film director Hideaki Anno. He is a genius in the world of visual images who is always taking on new challenges.

Video: 1984 film "Macross: Do You Remember Love? " is on a screen.

Narration: Mr. Anno first entered the professional world when he was in college. As an animator, he has created many famous scenes, including battle mechanisms and explosion scenes.

Video: 1995 TV animation series "Neon Genesis Evangelion" is on a screen.

Narration: And the film that drew a lot of attention as an animation director was "Neon Genesis Evangelion". It became a huge boom not only for anime fans, but for the whole country.

Video: 2000 film "Shikijitsu" and Video: 2004 film "Cutie Honey" are on a screen.

Narration: Animation and live action. It is a work that confronts the inner world of human beings. An entertaining work. A work that transcends barriers and captures the hearts of those who watch it.

That is the charm of Hideaki Anno.

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Honjo: Well, I heard that it's been more than 20 years since you started your career as an animator. You have directed dozens of films, which is an impressive number. Animators, original artists, and directors. What else was it? You also did animators and animation directors. It seems to be subdivided into various categories.

Anno: Yes. The Japanese way of making animation is a perfect division of labor. The character designer decides on the original picture, and then there is a storyboard based on that original picture. The storyboard is the blueprint for the entire project. Looking at that blueprint, and....

I think "animator" is a general term for the original artist or animator. Nowadays, the system is divided into two categories: original drawing and animation, even among animators. The key pictures, a picture like this (the starting point) and a picture like this (the ending point).

The original artist is the one who draws these two pictures and specifies how many pictures are to be placed between them. Then there's the animation man who actually draws a picture for here, here, and here (each of which is the midpoint between the starting point and the end point). Also, the picture here (the starting point) and the picture here (the ending point) are sometimes drawn rather roughly, so he has to redraw them neatly.

That's basically how the system works. After that, color is added to it, and the person who draws the background elsewhere combines it with the background to create a single screen. But nowadays, it's all done by computer, and the computer combines it all into a screen.

Takeda: I heard that when you were an animator, you were receiving such high praise that you were called a charismatic figure.

Anno: I don't think they called me a charismatic person back then.

As an animator, I was not equally balanced at all. I only ever did mecha, robots, airplanes, and other mechanical things, as well as explosions and other mecha and effects. That's all I did. I think I was not equally balanced. It's better to be equally balanced, though.

I think the ideal animator should be able to draw all sorts of things, including mechanics and characters. I couldn't draw people at all, so I'm not very good at it. I was only able to draw mecha. But if that was the only thing I could do, then I had to make sure that the drawings were worth it. So I worked a little harder on that part.

Takeda: When you were an animator, what do you think drove you to do the work you did? I think it was very simple work that required a lot of patience.

Anno: I think I liked watching the screen when I was an animator.

Takeda: You mean the finished product?

Anno: I'm happy when my cuts are done properly, and I'm happy when they turn out the way I wanted.

When it's long, it takes me two weeks to make a single cut. It takes two weeks to make a three-second video. That is how it works.

There are people who do the video, people who color it, and people who do compositing and special processing. Even after my work, the film is made by the hands of many people. So, when the film is made, all the "mistakes" come back to me.

I want to avoid that as much as possible, and at the same time, I want other people to be happy that he did the video or painted the colors. At the time, painting the colors was a very laborious and time-consuming process of dipping a brush in a bottle and painting one by one, so I tried to do my job in a way that would not make the painter think, "I shouldn't have done that cut." And when I made a mistake, I was very depressed.

'The Giant God Warrior of Nausicaa' became famous, but in my opinion, it was a failure. I'm really sorry.

Honjo: Oh really?

Video: 1984 film "Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind" is on a screen.

Narration: Hayao Miyazaki's 'Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind' was released in 1984. Mr. Anno's depiction of the Giant God Warrior in this work shocked many anime fans.

Takeda: Is that a failure?

Anno: It's a failure.

It's a small detail, but between the original drawings, there are five pictures with three frames of animation. Director Hayao Miyazaki instructed me to use 5 pictures, so I just went with 5. I wondered why I didn't resist nor make it seven.

It's frustrating to think about it now. I know that the more sheets I make, the harder the work will be, but with that, the Giant Warrior will melt too fast.

Honjo: You wanted to add a little more.

Anno: I should have had two more pictures in between, six more frames. I'm still frustrated about that. It would have been definitely better to have seven panels.

When I saw that rush (preview), I wanted to die. I felt "I had failed!". The more other people praised me, the harder it was for me. I could have made it better. After that, I stopped following what Mr. Miyazaki was saying.

In Miyazaki's mind, it should have been five, but I would have preferred seven.

Video: 1987 film "Royal Space Force: The Wings of Honnêamise"

Narrator: Animator Hideaki Anno. The culmination of his work is "Royal Space Force: The Wings of Honnêamise" from 1987. The countless pieces of ice peeling off from the rocket were precisely drawn by hand, not by CGI. This is truly a masterpiece.

Anno: I think that was probably the peak of what I could do as an animator. I can't do anything better than that. Even now, I can't do anything better.

There are fewer and fewer cuts that I'm happy with the work I've done. My peak as an animator was when I was the animation director for Royal Space Force. I feel like I've lost my motivation. I felt like there was nothing more I wanted to do.

Fortunately, I had a lot of options, and they let me be a director, so I went into that field. Well, there was nothing left for me to do but direct.

Video: 1995 TV animation series "Neon Genesis Evangelion"

Narration: The TV animation "Neon Genesis Evangelion" aired in 1995. With this work, the name of anime director Hideaki Anno became established. The mysterious enemy "Angel" attacked one after another. Evangelion, a humanoid weapon, was developed to fight them.

This work seemed to follow the classic path of robot anime, but it gradually took a complicated turn. The drama of Shinji Ikari, the protagonist, and other characters with various traumas is intertwined with elements of religion and philosophy. The screen shows a scene of the spiritual world in the play.

Rei: Why are you alive?
I don't know.
Asuka: Is that why you're alive, to find out?
Rei: Who are you living for?
Asuka: For me, of course.
Shinji: Maybe for myself...
Are you sure?
Rei: Are you enjoying your life?

Suddenly the screen changes to a scene where EVA-01 is eating Angel, from episode 19: Battle of the Men.

Misato: It's eating Angel.

Narration: The TV version ends with many mysteries left behind. However, the mysteries of the TV version left fans in a frenzy, and numerous interpretation books were published, making it a social phenomenon.

Honjo: I think it was a huge sensation. It became a social phenomenon. Looking back on it now, what do you think made it happen?

Anno: I think that the atmosphere in which viewers wanted to see something of the inner life of people increased dramatically in those days.

Honjo: I was really impressed with the way the main character expressed his feelings in words. Do you think that people were looking for that kind of thing in anime?

Anno: At the time, I think so. I don't know anything about philosophy myself. I haven't done much philosophical work in anime until now. That's what people say about Eva, but it's not philosophy, it's pedantry. (It means being proud of your knowledge.)

Anno: I think "know-it-all" is the best way to describe it. But it's pedantic.

Honjo: What do you mean by "know-it-all"?

Anno: It's like, "I don't know much about it, but if I use these words, I look smart," that's Eva.

But it leads the viewer to think that the part that looks wise is somehow cool on first glance, or that there might be something behind it. So, that was the methodology I used.

I don't know, for me film is a service industry. In the case of movies, they pay a little over ten dollars to come and see the movie. I think my job is to give back to the customer the equivalent of the amount of money they paid, which is a little over $10. At the very least, as a service provider, you have to give your customers something that makes them feel good.

I think I need to put that on film. For Eva, I felt like I put in a little too much.

Takeda: A little too much?

Anno: Yes. It was becoming a "place" to escape from reality, or a "device" to escape from reality. I didn't like seeing that.

When it was made into a movie (released in theaters in 1997), it was originally planned to be like that, but I wanted to give the audience a rude awakening and have them wake up. That's how I wanted it.

For me, it was also a service, because I think it's good for the customers. I think it's one kind of service to let people stay in a comfortable place like that for a long time.

But in the case of Eva, I felt like we shouldn't do that anymore. At least, I had to give the audience something to wake them up. I thought that would be good for the audience, so that's what I did in the end.

To me, that's also a service.

Narration: Favorite 5" is a ranking of the guests' favorites. Director Anno's theme was "My favorite building".

No.5 Kanmon Tunnel (connecting Yamaguchi and Fukuoka)
No. 4 Tower of the Sun (Osaka Expo Park. Expo Tower is also a favorite)
No. 3 Kasumigaseki Building (when it was completed. He said that the lobby is different from the current one.)
No. 2 Kuroyon Dam (the largest dam in Japan)
No.1 » 'Let's hear about the first place from the person himself in the studio.

Honjo: Then, Anno, please announce your number one favorite building structure.

Anno: Well, it's Tokyo Tower.

Honjo: Tokyo Tower.

Anno: Well, as you can probably guess, it has to be Tokyo Tower.

Takeda: I don't really understand why you'd choose Tokyo Tower.

Honjo: Is it so symbolic for you?

Anno: Tokyo Tower is very cool. It's beautiful.

Honjo: Is it cool?

Anno: It's cool. Well, only when it was newly built. When it was made, it was really cool. It's been getting worse and worse. Recently, there's been some kind of digital antenna on top.

Honjo: I know they put that on, but were there any other changes before that?

Anno: The color.

Honjo: Color?

Anno: The law was revised, and the color coding was changed.

<The color of high-rise towers is determined by the Civil Aeronautics Law. The Tokyo Tower was changed to its current color in 1986 due to a revision of the law.>

Honjo: It's red and white, right?

Anno: The distribution of red and white is different. In the past, the first viewing platform was red. Now it's white. It's not cool at all.

Honjo: White is no good, is it?

Anno: No. It has to be red.

Honjo: What? But it's still two colors, isn't it?

Anno: No, no. The beauty of the appearance is totally different. The old one is better.

Honjo: The old one is better?

Anno: Yes. I liked the previous one with more color coding. I thought, "How dare they repaint that!".

Honjo: You seemed to be quite upset about it.

Takeda: This is the first time we're doing this "Favorite Buildings" segment.

Anno: Is that so?

Takeda: What type of buildings do you like?

Anno: I like buildings that are the result of great technology, the people who built them, and the beauty of the finished product.

Takeda: I see dams are also in the ranking.

Anno: The Kuroyon Dam is great. If you actually go there, you will be overwhelmed. Even if there was some destruction of nature and such, it was amazing to build something of that magnitude at that time in that place. You can see it on "Project X(*4)," so please watch it.

- 4) PROJECT X ―Challengers―, A documentary TV program

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Anno's history

Photo: A black and white photo taken shortly after his birth is on a screen.

Narration: Hideaki Anno was born in 1960. He grew up in Ube, Yamaguchi Prefecture, overlooking the Seto Inland Sea. His favorite things were animation and special effects. Already at this time, he was good at drawing pictures and manga.

Honjo: I heard that you have been a big fan of anime and special effects since you were a child, what was your childhood like?

Anno: I don't think I was that out of the ordinary, but I stayed at home and watched all that stuff. I was not good at sports. I've always been a 2 in PE, and I've never been a 3. I've heard that if you attend PE, you get a 2.

Honjo: So you got barely a 2?

Anno: Yes, just barely.

Honjo: Hardly?

Anno: Yes, it was. In the softball throwing test, my record was 14 meters. I was worse than the girls.

Honjo: My record was also about 14 meters.

Anno: Yes. I'm as good as a girl.

Honjo: What subjects were you good at?

Anno: In elementary and junior high school, I don't know which subjects I was good at. Science, arts and crafts, and home economics.

Takeda: Home economics?

Anno: My father and my wife were tailors. Since I was a child, scissors and needles were my playthings.

Honjo: So you were rather fond of making things?

Anno: Yes, I was. I used to do a lot of embroidery, I think.

Honjo: Wow.

Anno: Well, the embroidery pattern was "Kikaider" (a special effects hero). I remember that I embroidered the red and blue parts in the right colors. This part of Kikaider (the upper left part of his head) is a mechanism, and it's transparent. I remember embroidering that part as well.

Honjo: Did you embroider it in detail?

Anno: I like detailed embroidery, like crawling with cords.

Honjo: You must have had a lot of patience.

Anno: That's the only thing. The rest, I'm just lazy.

Honjo: Are there any TV programs, animations, or manga that left an impression on you at that time?

Anno: I think I was still in kindergarten, but I was shocked by the first Ultraman. I think it's still with me today. I was shocked when I saw Ultraman.

Honjo: What was it about Ultraman that shocked you?

Anno: Basically everything, but the existence of Ultraman.

Honjo: Was it the heroic aspect?

Anno: Yes. The picture of a silver giant standing in a building district had a great impact on me.

I had seen monsters, but I didn't like them that much. I was really fascinated by Ultraman itself.

Photo: 1980 Entered Osaka University of Arts.

Narration: He went to Osaka University of Arts to study animation and special effects, which he loves. However, he disregarded his classes. He spent most of his time working on his own works.

Video: 1983 The Return of Ultraman, Matt Arrow 1 Launch Order is on a screen.

An independently produced but highly accomplished special effects film. Anno gave a monstrous performance as Ultraman with his bare face.

Video: 1983 DAICON IV, Opening animation is on a screen.

Narration: Then came a turning point in his life. The animation he made with his university friends for a science fiction event was highly praised by professionals, and it became a stepping stone to participate in such films as "Super Dimension Fortress Macross" and "Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind". However, he was so absorbed in making animation that he was expelled from the university.

Takeda: When you vaguely thought about the future, did you feel anxious?

Anno: No, not really. I didn't think much about the future. I was just letting things happen as they happened. I didn't make many decisions on my own.

When I participated in the production of the opening animation, my friend said, "Let's do it," and I said, "Okay, I'll do it."

When I joined Macross, my friend said, "Let's join them," and I said, "Okay, then I'll join." That's what it's all about.

Honjo: But you didn't think much about not wanting to go?

Anno: Well, no, I didn't. When I joined Nausicaa, my friend asked me to go for an interview with him. So it was like, "Okay, I'll go with you".

Honjo: A job interview?

Anno: Yes, I went to Hayao Miyazaki's office. I heard that they were short on staff.

If I hadn't been asked to go with him at that time, I wouldn't have met Mr. Miyazaki.

I'm really lucky. My mentor was Ichiro Itano(*1) when he was working on Macross. He's a genius animator.

- 1) was an animator who supported the golden age of robot animation. He was known as "Itano's circus" for his speedy, three-dimensional approach to moving precise mechanisms.

Anno: Ichiro Itano, who is a genius animator, and Hayao Miyazaki, whom I met after that, are my two mentors.

I think I am the only person in the world who has met this combination of masters.

For sure, I am very proud of this. Mr. Itano and Mr. Miyazaki have taught me not only the technical basics of making things and animation, but also the attitude of creating things.

I think I am still influenced by these two people. The way they created without compromise, including the egoistic part. I felt like, "Oh, this is okay," and "It's okay to do even this."

I think it was a great experience. Meeting these two people has been a great support for my current work.

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Questions from the audience to Anno

Anno: Well, I'll answer your questions now.

<Many audiences hand up at once.>

Anno: There are so many people here, it's hard to pick. I can't decide for myself. Then, let's pick the person sitting closest to me. Go ahead.

Man A: Well, Japanese animation is highly evaluated overseas. What are the differences between Japanese animation and overseas animation, and what do you think about them?

Anno: Okay. Basically, foreign anime is targeted at children. You can see that in the characters of Disney and Warner. They are made for small children, not for adults.

From a foreigner's point of view, it is surprising that there are people in Japan who watch anime after the age of 20. In Japan, I am over 40 years old, but people don't think it's so strange to see people over 40 watching anime anymore.

It may sound strange to say, but in Japan, anime is now being created for adults, not for children. I think Japan is probably the only country in the world where this is the case.

So, the reason why Japanese animation is so highly evaluated overseas is because it is the only one of its kind.

Man B: I think you said in an interview a few years ago that creators become useless after marriage. Now that you are married, do you think that statement is true?

<Anno married manga artist Moyoko Anno in 2002.>

Anno: I'm managing to change my style.

I don't think I can make something like that anymore, I mean Evangelion. It was like a single guy who was lonely, and he was trying to express that in anime. I can't be like that. I want to do something different.

However, people who like what I made before may think it's not the same anymore. But in my mind, I am happy to go to a new place.

I want to find a way to create interesting things while maintaining my happiness in marriage. I think other people are failing for the most part. I hope you can understand my enthusiasm.

B: Thank you very much.

Anno: Thank you very much.

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Video 1998 film production "Love & Pop" is on a screen.

Narration: In 1998, after Evangelion, Anno's first film was "Love & Pop," written by Ryu Murakami. It was not an animated film, but a live-action film. The film, which depicted the life of a high school girl, was shot with a digital video camera. The entire film is full of innovative and experimental images.

Video 2000 film Shikijitsu is on a screen.

Narration: Since Love & Pop, director Anno has focused his efforts on live-action films and has produced a number of works.

Honjo: After Evangelion, you shifted your main field of expression to live-action films. Why is that?

Anno: Well, the main reason was that I felt like doing live action. I wanted to do something different from Eva. That was live-action. I'm still interested in making live-action films, so I continue to do so.

Takeda: After directing both live-action and animation, I think there was probably a reconfirmation of the appeal of directing animation. Can you tell us about the differences from each perspective?

Anno: In the case of animation, there is already a solid image in the beginning. If you want to translate the image you have in your mind into images as much as possible, I think animation is the best way to do it in Japan today.

This is not the case with live-action. For example, you arrive at a shooting site and it is raining. It's the day we have to shoot this scene, and the script says it is sunny. I can't do anything about the rain, but I have to make do with the rain.

So, things didn't go exactly as I had imagined. I realized this the first time I put a live-action part in an Evangelion movie. I realized that I couldn't do anything exactly as I had imagined. I hated it at the time, but later I realized that it was a good point because it was different from the anime.

With Love & Pop, I tried to do things as differently as possible from the anime. I found it very interesting to work in live-action, where you never know how things will turn out depending on external factors, rather than in animation, where you can draw the image exactly as you want.

In the case of animation, there is no such thing as another take. There is only Take 1. There may be retakes of Take 1, but there is only one take of the video.

In the case of live-action, if you have two cameras, you have two sets of footage, and you can make various changes during the editing process, which is one of the charms of live-action. So you can see the whole picture for the first time when you edit.

In the case of animation, you can see the whole picture when you draw the storyboard.

Takeda: What do you think about moving the actors?

Anno: Rather than moving them, I'm happy to see the actors move around.

In the case of animation, you have to move the characters yourself to make them move. Animators move the characters, but there are only a few people who can draw the characters based on images that are not in the storyboards that I drew.

In the case of live-action, there is often no point in drawing a storyboard. Because things don't turn out the way you want them to. I like that part. It's like, "Are you kidding me? Why are you doing that? Cut it out!"

Video: 2004 film Cutie Honey is on a screen.

Narration: Anno's latest work "Cutie Honey". Based on a popular manga by Go Nagai. It is a live-action version of the TV anime that has taken the world by storm. Cutie Honey is an entertaining film full of action and sex appeal. Although it is a live-action film, it uses a variety of animation and synthesis techniques. The result is something that only director Anno can create.

Honjo: I'd like to ask you about your latest work, "Cutie Honey".

I thought that your works up until now have been mostly about protagonists who retreat into their own shells, or stories that make you think about such things.

But this time, it was all about entertainment, or rather, it was very open, gorgeous, interesting, and very speedy and enjoyable. I enjoyed it so much that it felt like a movie made by a completely different person.

Anno: Thank you very much. This one, in my mind, hasn't changed at all, but I feel like I've changed my artistic style anyway. I'm trying to bring the bright side of myself to the front.

Honjo: Why did you decide to make Cutie Honey into a movie, a live-action movie?

Anno: I just wanted to do something simple and interesting. I also wanted to do something with action.

When the project of Cutie Honey came up, I thought it would be a good idea, so I decided to go for it. This is how it happened. What I valued the most on set was the "spirit".

Honjo: Spirit?

Anno: Yes. What I want the audience to see is the "spirit" of the filmmaking team. Something like momentum. I'd like to capture that on film.

Honjo: Do you mean the staff or the cast?

Anno: Yes, and myself.

"Look at the spirit!" I hope that will come out in the film. If the audience can feel that, I think they will leave the theater with a good feeling. That's what I was focused on.

I wanted the audience to leave the theater with a smile on their face, not a sour look. That's what I've been trying to achieve from the beginning. I wanted to do this for sure. That's the kind of movie I want to make.

Narration: Anno's version of Cutie Honey has characters that do not appear in the original story. His wife, the manga artist Moyoko Anno, also participated in the character design.

Video: 2004 a collection of character settings drawn by Mrs. Anno is on a screen.

Anno: As I expected, he was very strict and gave me a lot of rejections.

It's not a choker, but it's a thin braided cord used for obi belts, with a diamond in the center of the cord. But he was very insistent that I should make the cord thicker. If I made it thicker, it wouldn't be cute at all, it would look a bit like a sumo wrestler or something, and the rest of the design is rather combative, so I wanted it to be cute.

We had a pretty good fight here. I even threw things. I said, "If it's not this, it's weird!" It was a big one.

Can you tell us about creator Hideaki Anno?

Anno: He's someone who doesn't compromise until the very last minute.

But he doesn't just push it all the way to the end, he tries to make the best choice at the time, which I thought was very professional.

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Back to the studio

Honjo: Which do you think you are more suited to directing, animation or live action?

Anno: Well, I don't think I'm suited for either of them.

Takeda: What do you mean?

Anno: I don't think I'm really suited to be a director.

Honjo: The reason why you don't think you're suited for directing is because you have your own image of what a director should be, and you're not close to it?

Anno: Yes. I don't have a strong sense of responsibility, so I feel like I'm finally getting by as a human being because I'm directing.

If I wasn't directing, I think I would be very irresponsible.

I feel like I'm somehow forcing myself to become a director even though I'm not really suited for it.

For me, it's a tool to connect with people.

Honjo: I'm sure this is something that all the fans are wondering, but will you ever do animation again?

Anno: Making 60 or 70 animations a week is an abnormal situation. There is a situation where the production side is pushing themselves to the limit to create anime, and I can't create under such circumstances.

Besides, I can't get the staff together anymore. I want to do a TV series, but it's very difficult to do a TV series now. I don't have that kind of determination at the moment.

If the animation situation calms down a little more, I think I can do animation, and if something else comes up that I want to do, I'll do animation again.

Anyway, right now, live-action is more interesting, so I'd like to continue doing live-action for a while longer. Well, it's not that I'm sick of animation, I'd like to do animation as well, but the situation and other factors make it difficult for me right now.

Takeda: It was like I saw many sides of him and all my questions were begged today. Especially to me, I guess.

Anno: That's not true.

Takeda: It's hard to tell from the audience side, but he was watching Ms. Honjo the whole time.

Anno: No, I can't help but look at beautiful women. I had a great time today.

Takeda: Thank you very much.

Honjo: Today's guest is the film director, Hideaki Anno. Thank you very much.

Anno: Thank you very much.

Hideaki Anno: Anno talks about "Live Action Movies and Anime" (2004)

- This is an excerpt from an interview recorded on GAINAX in 2004.
- Translation: Riki
- Source: https://type-r.hatenablog.com/entry/20160811

Did you feel any differences of filmmaking between live-action and animation?

Anno: I think all companies film the same way. But in my case, the industry sees me differently. So if I said "I'm going to do an anime (Eva)", I'm sure I would get over $950K right away. But if I said I'm going to do a live action film, I wouldn't be able to get that much money.

But you're filming live action instead of animation. Why is that?

Anno: I'm interested in making live-action films nowadays. Also, while animation is made by creating pictures based on images that exist in the mind, live-action is made with materials that exist in the real world, outside the mind. Of course, I think it's interesting to make fictional images that make the inner world real, which you can only make with animation, but right now I find it more interesting to make live action images that change with the influence of the outside world.

The storyboards are drawn by the director yourself, aren't they?

I think the process of recreating the "inside your head" is something that both anime and live action share.

In the case of live-action, when we do not have enough time or when there is a scene with screen projection, I storyboard. But on the set, I try to do it without the storyboard as much as possible. If it is Live-action, we can make it as we try it out on the set including the movements of the actors and the camera.

That's why like in the case of "Shiki-jitsu" or "Gamera 1999", we can visualize the film without a script. Of course, I have some images in my mind, but they don't need to follow all the time.

When and how did you start to have the desire to take live action films?

Anno: I was doing both when I was a student. It was more of a special effects film than a live-action film. I also was making anime with 8 mm film.

However, the animation industry looked strongest at the time, so after I was kicked out from college, I followed that trend and chose the animation industry, and I stopped making live-action films.

But when I was working on The End of Evangelion, I came to the conclusion that it had to be a live-action film. So I talked to Higuchi (Shinji), who works in not only animations but also special effects films. That's when Higuchi introduced me to the live-action staff, and it was great that I got to know producer Amagi. It was all thanks to Shin (Shinji Higuchi). He created an environment for me to work on live-action films.

Well, it all started when I did the live action part of Eva (the live action part in the film "End of Evangelion"). I think the main reason why I keep making live-action films is because it didn't work out at all. In the end, I threw away everything we shot. I think I'm still trying to get revenge for that.

You said "it had to be a live-action film" but why did you have to insert that live-action part into the complete anime world of "Eva"?

Anno: The image I wanted in there was something that I couldn't express with cell animation. I wanted something that felt more like reality, and I thought what's the closest to reality? That would be live action. Originally, the live-action part was supposed to be a drama about voice actors, but when we were shooting it, I felt, "This is not what I want". As a result, we ended up using scenery and footage of the audience in the movie theatre.

I didn't like to see people were overly obsessed in fiction at the time. It was scary, because they were too much addicted to fiction which was created by others. I wanted them to accept their own reality a little bit anyway and have a relative perspective on their own scale.

So I thought as one of the ways to make the viewer aware of their own reality would be to use a mirror. The footage of the audience in the theatre part was the image of a mirror. I used a sort of very dark screen(*1) when I release it on VHS, LD and DVD. If the screen was black, it would reflect your face as you watched it.

- 1) Movie theatre with no audience is shown as well

Kazuya Tsurumaki: Q&A from "Amusing Himself to Death"

- Article from Akadot by Owen Thomas
- Amusing Himself to Death: Kazuya Tsurumaki speaks about the logic and illogic that went into creating FLCL. The except is actually from a Q&A at Otakon.
- Source: page 1, page 2, page 3

When Tsurumaki visited Baltimore to speak to American fans at the recent Otokon Convention, predictably, many of the questions were along the lines of, "Hi, I really loved FLCL [or Evangelion], but could you please explain this part of it to me?"

Tsurumaki answered all questions genially with a self-deprecating and often mischievous sense of humor. For example:

Why does Haruko hit Naota over the head with her guitar?

Kazuya Tsurumaki: Naota is trying to be a normal adult and she belts him to make him rethink his decision.

Why does Evangelion end violently, and somewhat unhappily?

KT: People are accustomed to sweet, contrived, happy endings. We wanted to broaden the genre, and show people an ugly, unhappy ending.

Why is the character of Shinji portrayed as he is?

KT: Shinji was modeled on director Hideki Anno. Shinji was summoned by his father to ride a robot, Anno was summoned by Gainax to direct an animation. Working on Nadia [Nadia: Secret of the Blue Water, one of Anno and Tsurumaki's earlier projects] he wondered if he still wanted to work like this. He thought that working on Eva could help him to change.

Is there any particular reason why so many Gainax series feature very anxious, unhappy young male protagonists with no parents?

KT: Yes, the directors at Gainax are all basically weak, insecure, bitter, young men. So are many anime fans. Many Japanese families, including my own, have workaholic fathers whose kids never get to see them. That may influence the shows I create.

Could you explain the mecha bursting from Naota's head in FLCL?

KT: I use a giant robot being created from the brain to represent FLCL coming from my brain. The robot ravages the town around him, and the more intensely I worked on FLCL the more I destroyed the peaceful atmosphere of Gainax.

Why doesn't FLCL follow one story?

KT: In the third episode Ninamori was almost a main character, a kid who, like Naota, has to act like an adult. After episode three her problem was solved so we wrote her out. She has many fans in Japan and we got plenty of letters about that decision. For FLCL I wanted to portray the entire history of Gainax, and each episode has symbols of what happened behind the scenes on each of Gainax's shows. Episode one has many elements of Karekano; episode two, a lot of Evangelion references, etc.

Where does the title FLCL come from?

KT: I got the idea from a CD in a music magazine with the title Fooly-Cooly. I like the idea of titles that are shortened long English words. Pok?mon for "Pocket-Monsters" for instance, and an old J-pop band called Brilliant Green that was known as "Brilly-Grilly."

Is there any reason why the extra scenes added to Eva for the video release were cut in the first place? Did you think the story would mean something different with them intact?

KT: The scenes that were added to Eva for its video release aren't that important. We added them as an apology for taking so long to get the video out. Maybe they'll help people understand things, because the episodes were done under tough deadlines the first time around.

Can you explain the symbolism of the cross in Evangelion?

KT: There are a lot of giant robot shows in Japan, and we did want our story to have a religious theme to help distinguish us. Because Christianity is an uncommon religion in Japan we thought it would be mysterious. None of the staff who worked on Eva are Christians. There is no actual Christian meaning to the show, we just thought the visual symbols of Christianity look cool. If we had known the show would get distributed in the US and Europe we might have rethought that choice.

Interview with Yuko Miyamura (BS AnimeYAWA)

- Summary of an interview with Yuko Miyamura on a TV program called BS AnimeYAWA on NHK and BS2 channels
- Aired on March 28, 2005
- Additional source: http://moppara.g.hatena.ne.jp/moppara/20090309/p1, http://animaniajapan.livedoor.biz/archives/17687653.html, Japanese text: http://www.geocities.jp/animeyawa/eva.html
- Translator unknown (Possibly Animania blog?)

The commentators, Okada Toshio and Inui Kimiko featured six guests:

Miyamura Yuuko, voice actress of Asuka
Ootsuki Toshimichi, producer of the anime
Karasawa Shunichi, subculture columnist
Kotani Mari, sci-fi and fantasy critic
Takimoto Tatsuhiko, novelist
Fujitsu Ryouta, anime critic

In the 55-minute talk show, they talked about the scenes they like, how this anime should have been evaluated in the field of literature, and so forth. Their favorite scenes are as follows:

Ootsuki: Opening
Miyamori: Shinji and Aska's unison fight against the enemy in episode 9.
Takimoto: Depressed Shinji in episode 4 and the movie.
Kotani: Evangelion eating the Angel in episode 19.

For the first time in ten years, some of them told the private episodes of those days. Producer Ootsuki said he allowed Anno to do whatever he wanted in the anime except for the theme music. Ootsuki was particular about the theme and handled the music staff by himself. No anime staff, even Anno, met the music staff, he said.

Miyamura who played Asuka revealed the movie's final line "Kimochi warui." (Disgusting) was her idea, and it proved the rumor "Asuka's final line was Miyamura's idea" among the fans was true. She said the final line supposed to had been "Anta nankani korosareru nowa mappira yo!" It can be translated "I'd never want to be killed by you of all men, absolutely not!"

Rough translation of her talk is as follows:

Miyamura:
I had been thinking directors should convey their ideal how the show shold be to us. But Anno pitches us questions such as "What do you think for yourself if things went on such and such ways to you?" After recording all lines of the movie, I was called to the studio because the final line needed to be revised. Ogata came there too as it was Asuka and Shinji's scene. Asuka's final line was "Anta nankani korosareru nowa mappira yo!" in the film scenario. Anno didn't live with my line no matter how many times I tried. Ogata and I were at a loss how we should play what Anno wanted to express; she even tried to ride on me and choke me to meet his demand. He must have been pursuing reality. Concerning the final line we adopted, I'm not sure whether I should say about it in fact. At last Anno asked me "Miyamura, just imagine you are sleeping in your bed and a stranger sneaks into your room. He can rape you anytime as you are asleep but he doesn't. Instead, he masturbates looking at you, when you wake up and know what he did to you. What do you think you would say?" I had been thinking he was a strange man, but at that moment I felt disgusting. So I told him that I thought "Disgusting". And then he sighed and said "... thought as much." He said. " I thought as much. "

See: Theory and Analysis:Final Scene of End of Evangelion#Discarded Endings for more information on this.

Interview with Toshmichi Otsuki (Neon Genesis Evangelion producer)

- (Courtesy of Mainichi News)
- (Awaiting original source link)
- (Circa 2006)

exposition:

'Toshimichi Otsuki, working as producer in tandem with director Hideaki Anno, helped create "Evangelion," a manga that changed the cartoon business in Japan.

Evangelion led the way in forming the foundations of the anime business by pioneering what have become manga marketing staples such as screening on late-night TV, software sales and merchandising.

But, as an interview with Mainichi Manga Town's Kei Watanabe showed, Evangelion has not entirely been a bed of roses for the man who started as a humble producer and is now the managing director of King Records.'

interview:

Interviewer: A DECADE HAS PASSED SINCE EVANGELION FINISHED SCREENING ON TV. WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE ANIME NOW?

Otsuki: It's probably been a tough 10 years from the point of view of an anime producer.

I'm now 44 and I made Evangelion when I was 34. It's about the time in your career when you start thinking about taking the next big step.

In those 10 years, I've produced works like "Shojo Kakumei Utena" (Revolutionary Girl Utena) and "Sokyu no Fafuna" (Dead Aggressor), but nothing I've done has surpassed Evangelion.

Interviewer: WHAT WERE THE TOUGHEST TIMES?

Otsuki: Without doubt, the hardest thing was when we couldn't make the opening deadline for the movie back in 1997.

We couldn't release a complete work and were forced to bring out a movie in both the spring and again in the summer.

We had been working on the movie version while the TV series while still running for the first time, but I knew by the end of 1996 that we weren't going to make the deadline, so I made the decision to create two movies.

Anno-san never apologized, though. The end result was that we got almost the same amount of people in to watch both movies, which made the distributor, Toho, very happy, but it was really tough to make the decision to split up the story.

Even then, we still had to work up until the very last moment to get the second movie out on time. I went home to catch up on some sleep without even watching the movie.

Another difficult matter was the scheduling of the end of the TV series.

I have absolutely no recollection of having seen the rushes before the shows aired. Before I knew it, I was seeing things like (Eva) Unit 03 fighting on the screen and thinking: "What the hell is going on here?"

Interviewer: DESPITE EVERYTHING, YOU WERE AN ENORMOUS INFLUENCE ON THE ANIME WORLD.

Otsuki: There have been two major changes in the anime world since Evangelion came out.

The first is that TV networks have expanded their programming to include more manga. There's also more manga being shown on satellite and late-night TV. I think Evangelion proved without a doubt that anime could be a powerful business.

The other transformation Evangelion brought about was changing the face of (the central Tokyo district of) Akihabara.

Up until then, Akihabara had only been a place where people bought household appliances and electronics, but anime gradually began to make its presence felt more and more.

At the time, people could only buy either laser discs or video cassettes, but we still managed to change Akihabara so that it became a place that went from selling appliances to selling software.

Personally, I think the "Evangelion Effect" mainly extends to these two things.

Interviewer: AT LEAST YOU WERE A PIONEER IN THE CONTENTS SALES BUSINESS...

Otsuki: Maybe, but I haven't managed to come up with a hit since Evangelion, which makes looking back at that time a somewhat bitter experience.

What that all adds up to is that I've basically only being doing routine work.

I've got none of the excitement that I had at that time. Of course, I've got some good plans on the drawing board. But, ideally, now would have been a better time of my life to have come up with something like Evangelion.

Interviewer: WHY CAN'T YOU COME UP WITH SOMETHING LIKE EVANGELION?

Otsuki: When Evangelion came out, all I could think about was getting director Hideaki Anno's work out into the world, and getting the idea across to the world about just how good a work it was.

Anno-san concentrated on producing the work itself, while I concentrated on basically every other task associated with it.

It was me who made the orders when we needed to produce more laser disc and CDs and it was me who met with all the sponsors and the TV network people.

I only had one person working under me at the time, and we were constantly unable keep up with production demand for products because they kept selling so quickly.

Looking at the structure of the anime business now and the situation then was unthinkable. You could never work that way now.

Interviewer: DO YOU THINK THE SUCCESS OF EVANGELION CAME ABOUT BECAUSE IT WAS SUCH A GOOD PRODUCT?

Otsuki: I hardly said a word about the actual anime, itself. Up until that time, there had never been an anime about gigantic robots battling these mysterious monsters invading the planet, while at the same time focusing on what was going on in the minds of the main characters. But, Anno-san said that was the type of work he wanted to make, so I told him I would be backing him up while he made it.

In terms of doing something that had never been done before, it was almost as though we were a "pre-Colombian Columbus."

I can still clearly remember going to one advertising agency while on a search for sponsors and doing a presentation about Evangelion.

When I'd finished, one of the agency bigwigs turned to me and said, deadly serious, "If you bungle this project, you're fired."

When I went to the toy manufacturers, the reaction was pretty much the same.

I suppose the idea of a record company executive trying to sell an anime was unprecedented. Everything we did then was unprecedented.

But there was undoubtedly a thrill with every breakthrough we made.

Interviewer: WHAT CAN TODAY'S ANIME WORLD LEARN FROM EVANGELION?

Otsuki: Now, there seems to be an atmosphere of "get whatever you can" and all the talk is about "rights, rights, rights."

Focusing on promoting yourself and your works is not good enough.

You've got to make yourself feel good first by wanting to create a sellable work and a work that will make you satisfied.

When Evangelion was screening, I never once mentioned King Records on any of the LDs or CDs or commercials that were available at the time.

The only thing I ever talked about when I was selling Evangelion was the director, Hideaki Anno. I backed him to the hilt and asked Anno-san to express himself as a director.

And we achieved everything we did because that was all we did when it came to Evangelion. (By Kei Watanabe) [Mainichi Daily News / May 06]

Megumi Ogata on Evangelion voice acting

- Excerpt of an interview between Ogata and Nakata Atsuhiko (Oriental Radio) from **Continue** Magazine Volume 46
- Circa (2009)
- Source: http://zepy.momotato.com/2009/07/07/ogata-megumi-on-evangelion-voice-acting/

Nakata: That reminds me, in the old movie version there was a scene where Shinji was masturbating. How was that recorded?

Ogata: Hahaha. It's obvious but that was my first time doing something like that (laughs). I thought to myself that I can't get this wrong just because I'm female! So I talked to Tachiki Fumihiko who voices Gendou and said "Dad, this is my first time, I'm not sure if I will be able to do this right. So if I got it wrong, please tell me" (in Shinji voice)

Nakata: Hahaha!

Ogata: After recording ended, we went “How did I do, dad?” “You did well, Shinji” “Yes! I got praised by my dad!”

About the recording for Eva 2.0

Ogata: It was quite difficult. The recording for Eva 2.0 was split up and done over a period of a few days, and the recording on the last day had me basically shouting for the entire time.

Nakata: That much!?

Ogata: In the end I just couldn’t stay standing anymore and collapsed on the studio floor, and while I was sitting on the ground, Director Anno came in and sat on the studio floor with me. While sitting, he said “Thank you very much” and I replied “Thank you, too” and we shook hands (laughs). This was the first time I got praised by Anno.

Nakata: That was the first time!

Ogata: And then he said two things to me which made me really happy. The first was “Thank you, for keeping the character’s feelings unchanged even after 13 years”

Everyone: Ohhh!

Ogata: And second was “On top of that, thank you, for adding 13 years of your own experience to the current Shinji”

Everyone: Ohhhhhh!

Megumi Ogata on the heights of fandom and depths of the Japanese animation industry circa 2001

- Rocking the boat: Megumi Ogata on the heights of fandom and the dephts of the Japanese animation industry
- 2001 or earlier
- Source By Dany Johnson at Akadot.com

Seiyuu are typically recalcitrant about issues related to how the anime industry treats voice actors. But recently, spurred by both anime's popularity in the United States and an Asian economic recession, the Japan Actors Union and individual seiyuu have found a stronger voice to articulate their concerns to an international market. Seiyuu Megumi Ogata, "Evangelion's" Shinji and "Yu Yu Hakusho's" Kurama, speaks out about art and capitalism, school yard bullies, and anime's necessary sex appeal.

Q. You mentioned previously that Japanese animation is not in a good situation right now. Why not?

MO: Unfortunately, anime is generally rated low by the Japanese public. One reason is that many people still think anime is for small children, which is no longer true. A series of very abnormal murders of small children that occurred in 1989 can be another reason. Because the criminal was over 20 years of age, and a devotee of anime and video games, the whole nation started persecuting and discriminating against anime and its fans. Those feelings still remain. Creative teams now must make anime within very small budgets - this includes voice actors. Furthermore, the ongoing recession makes it more difficult to train good actors and artists to create good works. We are now facing a hard time and therefore we are given fewer opportunities to use our high abilities and techniques; and the situation is getting worse every year. I feel that we must do something about it.

Q. Do you think shows for children in Japan are more sophisticated than American or European shows?

MO: I think that is true in some ways, but it isn't always true. I think Disney movies are wonderful. I cannot believe that "Fantasia" was made that many years ago. But the situation of the Japanese animation industry in which the best techniques and abilities cannot be fully utilized is something that we are ashamed of. If we had the support of big sponsors from abroad, the situation may turn out differently. It's a shame.

You achieved near instant fame with your first character, Kurama, the half-fox bishounen from "Yu Yu Hakusho." Did this surprise you?

MO: Yes, it did, but I was struggling to play my part at that time. He was a difficult character to play. He appears to be a 16-year old boy but is actually a fox monster that has been living for thousands of years. I was so preoccupied with preparing for the role that I didn't even notice I was becoming popular.

"There was a time when I actually pushed Yuko Miyamura to the floor to strangle her during the last scene of the 'Evangelion' movie in which Shinji strangles Asuaka. I couldn't act very well in playing that scene. I was so agitated that I strangled her too hard, making it impossible for her to say her lines for a while. Of course, I apologized to her for doing that. I almost killed her."

Q. You are probably best known in the US for playing Shinji in "Evangelion." Some of Shinji's speeches sound like they might have been ad-libbed. Did you get to ad-lib and experiment when you were working on "Evangelion?"

MO: I'm delighted that you think I sounded natural as if I was doing ad-libs. I don't remember doing anything experimental. There was a time when I actually pushed Yuko Miyamura to the floor to strangle her during the last scene of the "Evangelion" movie in which Shinji strangles Asuka. I couldn't act very well in playing that scene. I was so agitated that I strangled her too hard, making it impossible for her to say her lines for a while. Of course, I apologized to her for doing that. I almost killed her.

Q.A censored version of "Sailor Moon" has been airing in the US. Haruka and Michiru were turned into cousins and much of their dialogue was changed. When the show first aired in Japan, was there any contention coming from parents or religious leaders?

MO: When I was cast to play Haruka, I asked director Kunihiko Ikuhara, "Are they gay?" He answered, "Act as if they are married couple." And I asked him again, "Married couple? You, mean, with two ladies?" He replied, "Yes." So they are husband and wife. Their appearance on TV was sensational, something unheard of in TV cartoons. And the show was aired every Saturday at 7 p.m. when every member of the family would be gathering around the TV. Even so, it seems that we were able to grab the viewer's heart. The program's rating continued to rise, and I received a lot more fan letters than before. Because many people watched the show with their family, not only the anime fans but also small children and their mothers became our fans as well. There was a time I was called "a madam killer" [a term used to describe a person so charming that they can get any woman, usually applied to men, however Ms. Ogata's seiyuu career stands as a testament to how appropriate the term is for her].

I'm sure that the anime also appealed to gay people, too. I heard that "Sailor Moon" was the talk of the town in Shinjuku 2-chome, a famous gay street in Japan. Of course, it may have caused controversy in some strict, religious families, but the entertainment won a victory over the religious fanatics. Maybe it's because Japan is not as religious a country as the U.S. But the anime is not only about girls with mini skirts and gay couples. It also has a very interesting story. It focuses on very important aspects of human behavior, and it is very well written. The anime deserved popularity. Of course, the sexiness is also an important thing. Perhaps the most important. I am attracted to anime with a touch of sensuality - without being too indecent like X-rated movies - because sexy things are simply entertaining. [With the voice of Haruka Tenoh] "Don't you think so too, my cute little American kitties?"

"I don't do work just to please the sponsors and creators, and I don't mind fighting with the crew about doing something exploitative just to entertain the viewers."

Q. Do you have a favorite character?

MO: I may sound like a very typical, well-mannered Japanese woman saying this, but I like every one of them. All the characters are independent individuals and, at the same time, a part of me. The characters I played for a long time such as Kurama in my debut anime, "Yu-Yu Hakusho," Sailor Uranus in "Sailor Moon," Shinji Ikari in "Evangelion," and Melvina McGarren in the video game "Melty Lancer" would be my most memorable ones.

Q. You have a way of creating intensity for your characters without overacting. What do you do in the way of preparation for these roles? Or do you have to go into recording sessions cold?

MO: Without overacting? I'm delighted that you would notice something like that in spite of the difference in languages. It is something I keep in mind all the time. Maybe it is because I haven't played so many characters that require over-actions. I wouldn't automatically apply a high-pitched voice to a child and low-pitched voice to men. Once I understand the part with my heart and body, the voice comes out naturally as if the character is actually alive. I thoroughly research and study the background of the character, then I'll clear my mind right before saying my lines, letting my heart play the part by itself.

Q. Do you ever feel as if the boundary between you and your character becomes blurred?

MO: Yes I do, quite often. In studios, the character's feelings often remain in my mind before and after I finish acting. I sometimes really fall in love with the seiyuu who plays the partner of my role. However, this love eventually fades away as I walk out of the studio. It is like a dream, fragile as a water bubble.

Q. When you were growing up were you interested in acting?

MO: When I was little, being an actress was nothing but a dream to me because I wasn't beautiful or cute. I was bullied a lot at school for this. I was good at science and math and so planned to be a teacher. But that all changed when I performed in a school play at the age of twelve. Since nobody wanted to play the part of an old shrine maiden, I had to take it. But I wanted to do my best so I tried very hard. After my long monologue in the play, I received a big applause. When I came out for the curtain call, I heard another loud applause and calls for an encore. I was so delighted. I was praised by a lot of people, and even the students that bullied me started to respect me, and later I became friends with everyone. Because I used to be bullied, being respected and making friends were very important things for me. It was then that I started to have an interest in acting.

Q. Why is your website split into two sections - Megumi Ogata and em:ou?

MO: "em:ou" is my artist name that I have started using recently. "Megumi Ogata" is my real name, but it shares a connotation with my actress identity. I changed my name not because I wanted to wipe off that kind of image, but I wanted to go back to a simple and pure starting point to create my work as a solo musician, which puts me closer to myself. "em:ou" is a pronunciation symbol for the initials of my name, "Megumi Ogata." I wonder what can be created from scratch, a clean slate on which there's nothing but a symbol.

Q. I've looked at some fan websites and I was impressed by the emotional intensity of your fans. Many of them sign the guest books using the name of one of your characters, and they all declare their undying devotion to you. Do you think you have a closer relationship to your fans than most celebrities?

MO: It's a difficult question. My first priority is to express myself. Next, I care about how people look at me. I don't do work just to please the sponsors and creators, and I don't mind fighting with the crew about doing something exploitative just to entertain the viewers. Would American people be surprised if I say such a thing? In Japan, the sponsors and broadcasting companies' opinions have a major influence. We have to give into some things because of their money. I think it is better to exchange opinions and hold meetings to produce good works, but we are not given enough time for that. Because of that, people are annoyed when someone proposes something that is not planned in advance. Since I'm not even a Hollywood star, it puts me in a worse situation when I do such things, but even so, I think it worth the risk if the quality of the work improves and the viewers enjoy it. Frankly, I'm not a clever type of person [laugh]. However, the fans know very well about my struggle, and they believe that there are works that can only be done by me. In that sense, I may be closer to fans than many other well-known people.

Q. Is there anything else you'd like to say?

MO: Compared to American entertainment, which has a broader audience and targets the world market, Japanese entertainment is made under very harsh conditions. It is partly because of the problems of Japan's union. Even when Japanese anime is aired abroad, the Japanese seiyuus receive no pay, not even a single yen. Still, we are proud of our shows and all the people involved with them. Because I want more people to be aware of the situation of actors, writers and directors in the Japanese animation industry, I have included some unpleasant things in my comments. I apologize for this, but I was very happy that you asked me about it so that it can get to the public. Please take a look at Japanese anime. If you find a bit of enjoyment in it, I would be delighted. I will still continue to do my best work.

Sadamoto: The making of EVA Seifuku – Reality beyond what an anime can bring; Everything from seifuku fashion to kawaii culture and secrets of EVA (World Seifuku Project 12/2010)

First interview:

- Source: https://web.archive.org/web/20110129155050/http://www.sekai-seifuku.org/en/interview1_1/

asianbeat: Firstly, can you tell us how you feel about the collaboration between Evangelion and the seifuku shop CONOMi in the World Seifuku Project?

Sadamoto: CONOMi have a reputation for quality, and I thought that if we collaborated we could make the real EVA seifuku, not just a cosplay costume seifuku. asianbeat: What actually makes the genuine article different from the rest?

Sadamoto: The same quality material and needlework as genuine seifuku. Not just cosplay costumes that last for a party, but of a quality that high school girls can wear it to school everyday, and sometimes as casual wear.

Aiura: The actual sample we have brought today has been reinforced in areas that suffer wear and tear, like the pleats which have been made to last for three years.

Sadamoto: Your average cosplay seifuku has sacrificed durability for low cost, but I knew I could trust CONOMi to do a proper job. This seifuku is made up of a top and bottom, so at a glance you can recognize it as EVA seifuku, but girls can also mix and match as they like.

Aiura: To ensure an easy fit we have a waist adjuster, and a pocket that preserves the silhouette. We have taken special care in the less than obvious places. Sadamoto: Really, there is a pocket there! It doesn’t just look good, it’s practical too.

asianbeat: Speaking of the genuine article, I heard that the material color – everything from the thread – was specially dyed.

Sadamoto: The range of colors of the off-the-rack material is limited, and I was amazed by the color of the sample threads that we received. But thanks to this process we were able to find just the color we wanted.

Aiura: Thanks for the compliment.

asianbeat: So you were able to get the color that Sadamoto-san had created in his mind.

Sadamoto: As in the concept, we wanted it to be “genuine EVA seifuku”. In animation we have to draw numerous cells, so we have to keep it simple. This goes for the expression of the characters and other details. We have to abbreviate many details when making an anime. But I wanted to include all the abbreviated parts of the anime into the detail of the genuine seifuku to make it real, even though imaginary.

The seifuku in the anime is simplified, so lets make the original – this became the concept. Let’s not just reproduce the drawing, lets make the genuine seifuku that the anime is based on.

asianbeat: In manufacturing EVA’s seifuku – the original seifuku – in order to make it even more real, you received advice from Sadamoto-san. Aiura: When I was asked to make EVA’s original seifuku it was a huge challenge. I would be thrilled if EVA fans could see the minute detail of the seifuku. asianbeat: The color is a calm elegant blue. It looks like you are particular when it comes to color.

Sadamoto: About two years ago I saw the movie Flyboys. The French Air Force uniform in the movie was a special shade of blue and it really struck me. The shirt collars were really well made.

Aiura: Yes, it is the average type sailor uniform, but usually you find they have a larger collar at the back. I think we have succeeded in expression while retaining this cuteness.

Sadamoto: It’s kawaii isn’t it? In the winter you can wear a sweater over the top.

asianbeat: Which part of the uniform were you particular about?

Sadamoto: I suppose it is the lines rather than the total shape. The fine shirt fabric, the starched lines and folds, the body in places with room – I thought these areas are the most attractive parts….though some may say it might be a fetish (LOL)

Maybe it is because I am an anime artist that I am fussy about the body. When I first started drawing I drew white cloths with definite folds and lines. Perhaps it is because I draw that I reacted to the “smart lines and folds”. I reckon that if you get the right fabric it can give an impression of being genuine.

Aiura: Well the fabric we have used for the shirts is the same as what we use for actual seifuku. Fabric selection is of the utmost importance. The checked skirt that the new Evangelion character Mari wears is a woven tartan check with warp and weft weave. There is no comparison between a mere print and the real woven fabric.

asianbeat: In the projects you have been involved in, have you been particular about what seifuku you want a certain character to wear?

Sadamoto: No, I haven’t been so particular about design. It is more of a means to depict a character. Some wear their uniforms neatly, and others wear their pants low on the waist. But by lining the two types together I can create a contrast in character. That’s how I use it. I don’t make many anime where all girls wear seifuku. It is very difficult to use seifuku in animation, like where the skirt is pleated and waves as the character moves. I once was in charge of a scene where four to five girls wearing seifuku walked into a restaurant and all sat down. It took about three days, but it was on air for an instant. Just hearing the word “seifuku” makes me say “aahhh”.

asianbeat: For an animator the thought of seifuku seems to bring a reaction of "this will be hard”. In depicting the different character and style of the girls was it difficult to make the seifuku?

Sadamoto: Hard…well it was difficult to, let’s say find a loose fitting one for Ayanami with her indifferent character, where Asuka needed to wear a more tight fitting one. I had that kind of, image of what suited who. When I got the first sample from CONOMi and saw the baggy form they had worked on, it wasn’t quite there.

Aiura: It was the first time we tried making anime seifuku so we watched the anime over and over. We only got to look at pictures of the characters, that made it difficult for us.

Sadamoto: That’s right. It may be OK on the screen, but when you wear it for real it looks different. It was just a matter of degree, but I asked them to adjust the details.

asianbeat: Sadamoto-san, you have been involved in the project overseeing it from start to finish. I suppose you could say that it was under your total supervision.

Sadamoto: There are few collaborations where you get to check so many samples. With every sample I would make requests, and the next one would always be of a higher quality and bring better ideas. I was very happy.

asianbeat: Aiura: We are very happy that you gave us such a unique opportunity.

Sadamoto: It was a great learning curve. Each time they would show me seifuku that was the genuine article and I really learned a lot. The differences between the anime image and the actual seifuku girls wear - the shape of the seifuku, skirt length etc. what the seifuku looks like when actually worn – I discovered so many things. CONOMi has seifuku-making skill and know-how, enough for me to just sit back and let them handle it. It was fun right to the finish. I am very satisfied with the result.

Aiura: Thank you so much! It is indeed genuine EVA seifuku of a quality that can be worn to school and shows detail that cannot be expressed in anime. I can’t wait to see who will enjoy this garment.

Second roundtable interview:

- Source: https://web.archive.org/web/20110218213313/http://www.sekai-seifuku.org/en/interview2_1

To commemorate the beginning of the World Seifuku Project we have organized a special "summit". Participants in the summit include the supervisor of the EVA seifuku production Mr. Sadamoto Yoshiyukui, the president of the Seifuku Shop CONOMi Mr. Aizawa, Ministry of Foreign Affairs "Kawaii Ambassador" (Japanese pop culture ambassador) producer and Japan's foremost expert on kawaii culture Mr. Sakurai Takamasa and Ms. Kitamura Shizuka from the girls unit C-ZONE. The above members all got together to discuss Japan's seifuku fashion and kawaii culture. Girls from all over the world just love the seifuku in Japanese anime.

Sakurai: Hello, nice to be here. Actually I have had dealings with CONOMi for quite a while now. Over the past three years I have been to about 60 cities in 19 countries around the world spreading cultural diplomacy, in search of the Japanese "kawaii culture" from an overseas perspective. It is amazing to see how popular Japanese seifuku is.

Kitamura: Hello, I'm Kitamura Shizuka from C-ZONE. Nice to meet you all.

Sakurai: I have been to events in Paris and China with Kitamura-san where she performed, as well as the Japan Expo (which is the world's biggest Japanese pop culture event taking place since 2000 in the suburbs of Paris, France). She loves seifuku and also loves EVA, so she is here as a representative of Japanese girls.

Kitamura: Yes, I am a really big EVA fan. When EVA started I was only about 5 or 6 years old.

All: Five years old! (lol)

Kitamura: Yes! My brothers and sisters love it. In primary school I read the comics, and then saw the TV anime, then the movie – I have all 12 volumes of the comic. That's how much of a fan I am.

Sadamoto: Thank you very much.

Sakurai: Just before she was to sing in front of 3,000 people at the Japan Expo I whispered to her "if you say 'I am an Otaku' they will love it", which as I expected drew a huge round of applause from the crowd. (lol)

Kitamura: Everyone understands the term "otaku", don't they?

Sadamoto: Overseas fans really know their Nihongo. In places like America being able to speak Japanese is a status symbol for otaku.

asianbeat: The term "seifuku" has recently entered their vocabulary too.

Aiura: In the 2009 ROMIX (a large scale event held in Rome introducing Japanese pop culture which attracted 75,000 people) Sakurai-san was able to get CONOMi to display their seifuku and you saw quite a few seifuku cosplayers there.

Sadamoto: I think when I went to the Japan Expo seifuku had just started to become trendy. It was about the time SCANDAL debuted. I think it was about the time when seifuku first started to appeal to people.

Sakurai: I think that it was about the year after Sadamoto-san went to the expo that seifuku got really popular. From the 2007 Japan Expo onwards. Anyway, I was really blown away by the popularity of seifuku. Everyone who saw someone wearing seifuku would say "I want to wear it too!"

Sadamoto: Had "K-ON!" made its way there then? Or was it Haruhi (the Melancholy of Haruhi Suzumiya)? For boys cosplay it would have been from "Ouran High School Host Club".

asianbeat: Seifuku is popular because it represents the kawaii-ness of Japan. What do you think is its attraction?

Sadamoto: Seifuku itself was on the scene before with the Russian girls unit t.A.T.u. But I think the reason for its recent popularity is largely to do with Japanese anime. Recent Japanese animation is full of soft high school dramas where nobody gets killed or hurt, and I think people long for this kind of school experience. Everyone getting together and having fun – I think this is what people prefer.

Sakurai: Speaking of seifuku, when I went to the Salon del Manga in Barcelona in 2007 (Spain's biggest ever Japanese anime/manga event) I interviewed two girls wearing seifuku. I asked them "Why do you wear seifuku" to which they replied "Japanese high school girl's seifuku is a symbol of freedom".

Sadamoto: Freedom!?

Sakurai: I double checked to see if I got their answer right to which they replied "yes, it is unmistakably freedom". Overseas girls didn't have a concept of school uniforms being fashionable, but when they see Japanese girls shortening the skirt length and arranging their seifuku freely, overseas girls begin to think the seifuku fashion is cool and pay the Japanese school girls respect.

Sadamoto: That's interesting, especially because seifuku was originally designed to restrict fashion freedom.

Sakurai: It seems like they are taking our culture as a sort of a counter culture. And Chinese high school girls have said, that to them, Japanese high school itself is seems like a fantasy. Dying their hair brown, wearing seifuku – unheard of in China. To them it seems like the reality of Japan and the world of anime are one and the same. This is symbolized by their desire to wear seifuku. The seifuku in the anime has become the object of girls' desire – especially in China.

Aiura: For us in the seifuku making industry we get a lot of inspiration from anime, movies and TV dramas when creating a garment. On the other hand, I think animators use actual high school seifuku to base their creations on. Anime is not necessarily detached from reality, and it is a bit like the chicken and the egg. I feel that kawaii seifuku is a result of this mutual synergy.

Sakurai: The original seifuku created for the World Seifuku Project is a fantastic experiment. I think there are not many collaborations between anime and fashion that are so particular about the details. I am a big EVA fan so personally I am very excited. I can't wait to see girls wearing the seifuku. Kitamura: I was shown the seifuku, and it was totally awesome seeing the two dimensional anime seifuku before my very eyes. Seeing the First Municipal Middle School uniform makes me so excited. Will I wear it like Ayanami or like Asuka would?

Sakurai: The other day I went to a SKE48 concert and on stage the MC asked the members, if they were born again what would they come back as. One girl said that she would come back as an "anime character". Not as a specific anime character, but just in an anime. Wow!

Kitamura: Well I have to admit that I would like to live in the world of anime too :)

Sakurai: You seem serious :) The more girls say they want to live in the world of anime and manga the closer it gets to the real world!

Sadamoto: I have asked people why they prefer the world of anime and manga, and they reply that they used to be fans of idols in their early twenties. But those young idols grow older and get married, and when they do it is a cold shock to the system – but Lum Invader will never get married! They say "I would rather be in the anime world where you never age", and I can see where they are coming from. If you are going to follow an idol who is out of reach, you may as well follow a two-dimensional anime/manga idol.

Sakurai: Anime is a big factor behind the popularity of seifuku among junior and high school girls overseas. There have been some cases of anime seifuku being reproduced overseas, but to tell the truth the quality wasn't much good. They must long for the seifuku that Japanese wear. Is it difficult to draw seifuku in anime?

Sadamoto: Yes it is. You can't cut corners drawing seifuku. Drawing pleats sends a shiver down my spine ;) For example, with Mari's skirt, I have instructed that only the outline of her skirt be pleated. We don't draw the pleat lines. We only draw the check lines. We don't draw any vertical lines, just draw the outline fluttering. Just think of how difficult it is. Ayanami's Tokyo-3 First Municipal Middle School Girls Uniform has two pleats in the front and one at the back and I'm always thinking how to reduce the number! If you have a pleated skirt and you want to make the skirt flutter the pleats make it really difficult. If only I could even reduce just one line… Perhaps I am being too pessimistic here?

asianbeat: I didn't know that the number of pleats was such a trade secret!

Sakurai: Mari's seifuku is a kawaii design that you could wear to school as is.

Sadamoto: Yes. When I got the instructions on Mari's seifuku design, the document consisted of only two lines: British-style and Christian Missionary School-style. When I asked the general director Anno-san "What is Missionary School-style", he replied "I don't know, create an image from the words"! I then asked him for some reference material and a few days later he brought some photos of British school girls and said "Like this". All their skirts were long – 15cm below the knee – and some looked so old! Looking at all the photos I found that many used check designs, most school girls wore tights and the blazers had colored edges. I used these features in creating the design. I told Amano san that if she didn't wear a blazer it wouldn't look very British. In the trailer of EVA 1 you know Mari is wearing a Blazer, but in EVA 2 it would not be right if she wore one so I changed the design.

Sakurai: Mari's entrance scene on the top of the building is really something. And she is wearing Tartan check. Why does it look so attractive? Now even AKB48 costumes always have Tartan check.

Kitamura: I love Tartan check too. It's kawaii, but at the same time has an elegant air of maturity. It has a strong image of being mature. If a high school girl wants to feel more mature a black skirt is just a bit too dull, but a red Tartan check has that adult look.

asianbeat: There are plenty of idols wearing Tartan check these days.

Sakurai: There sure are. I often go to pop idol concerts and you know there are plenty wearing CONOMi seifuku. It has come to a point where I can tell at a glance if someone is wearing the CONOMi brand.

Sadamoto: I think the Tartan check looks cute because of the combination with the mini skirt. If it was longer it just wouldn't look so cute. It has become a bit of a boom recently.

Sakurai: Come to think of it, Tartan check mini skirts are a Japanese invention aren't they?

Sadamoto: You may be right. Also, with the combination of black knee-high socks to make the zettai ryoiki is also a Japanese original.

Aiura: The zettai ryoiki is an area that high school girls are very particular about. They roll up their skirts at the waist in increments of 1-2cm to make their skirt shorter. They really work hard at looking kawaii. [Zettai ryouiki (絶対領域) loosely translates into "absolute territory" and is the area of bare skin seen between a skirt rim and thigh highs.]

Sakurai: Just changing the subject, did you know that there is a catalogue for nurse uniforms?

Sadamoto: Yes, I have heard of it.

Sakurai: Some hospitals have started using pink uniforms, and in no time pink has gained a positive image. What is the status of the color pink in anime?

Sadamoto: Yes, pink is the symbol of femininity. In anime we can't really use white. It would break up the background. We add a shade of another color to white, sometimes green and sometimes blue to match the character's complexion, so we often add a little pink to the white background. However, I think I put in blue for Ayanami. Pink has been popular for a long time in the anime world.

Speaking of pink, at first it wasn't used at all for Mari's plug suit and we didn't even test it. For over two weeks we would try green, then yellow, and then it struck me "Pink is it". We photoshopped in pink and it was perfect, and decided on the spot to make it pink.

Sakurai: Wow! I can't imagine Mari's plug suit being any color other than pink – it's perfect.

Sadamoto: Ayanami's plug suit is white, and Asuka's is red. Pink is in between these two colors and it loses some impact, so I did think about making it a more outrageous color. Black would be more British, but a bit harsh, so I went for green. Mari's older model plug suit is green, but I was surprised how much pink suited her.

Kitamura: This pink is a very kawaii color. I feel more kawaii just by wearing pink. My image of Mari is not kawaii, but the color really suits her.

asianbeat: The World Seifuku Project seems like it is proceeding as planned.

Sadamoto: I just saw a sample and I felt they have been able to encapsulate EVA's key colors. Up until now I have been involved in a number of product collaborations, and it is very difficult to find a balance with the key color. If you go for something stylish you must be careful to get the balance right or it will end up looking comical. The key color can be a real can of worms.

Aiura: It was a headache working out how to use the key color in the seifuku. I didn't want it look like cosplay fashion in school, but wanted to make a real uniform that you can wear and also feel like becoming a character in EVA

Sadamoto: I think the balance is right. If you go overboard it becomes purely cosplay. We discussed this very matter the other day. Today Evangelion-related goods are in its second stage. Previously we just used the #3 Tokyo and Evangelion logo as is. However, in this stage we have made separate products and will place the brand #3 Tokyo or NERV in some inconspicuous place. Some may say "That's not an EVA product", to which I will say "So what"! Those who really want to buy EVA goods will. I think we have reached a stage where this is the right balance. For example, you might see a single dot, but if you look closely it is the face of a student.

Sakurai: You can do that with ties and stuff too. I prefer the inconspicuous logo to the one that is in your face. Sadamoto: American anime fans tend to like logos and characters that stand out, Perhaps it is part of their national character – "We like Japanese anime and this is a logo to prove it".

Sakurai: Well, America has the chain store culture. For example, if an American opened a maid café, rather than giving each store their own special atmosphere they would probably make it into a chain store franchise. High school girls adjust the length of their skirt, trying to look different to others in a way that nobody really notices, is important to Japanese. Japan likes this kind of minute, unique adjustment. I think seifuku and anime goods have reached this stage.

Kitamura: When you put it that way I have to agree!

Sadamoto: But the one thing that I don't understand is that when high school girls shorten their skirts and it becomes a kawaii trend, all tend to follow the trend. In this case a maxi-skirt would stand out more. In a way, I think perhaps this is the real fashion…but this may be a wrong idea here;-)

Sakurai: I can see what you mean – it is similar but different. It is a matter of finding the balance between the stand-out finger pointing "look at that" type fashion, as opposed to just being fashionable.

Sadamoto: Being kawaii is becoming more and more common. What happens when everyone looks the same? It just can't be!

Aiura: There is a point in time when seifuku dramatically changes. It was quite a while ago when in the TV drama "Sukeban Deka" (The delinquent girl detective), Saito Yuki wore a maxi skirt. Straight after that skirts went mini and loose socks came in. Many school girls took to this fashion back then. Next we saw the rise of the orthodox idol group and all of a sudden navy blue high school socks came in. In the cycle of fashion I think we are due for a dramatic new item to hit the scene some time soon.

Sadamoto: Character design is much the same – trying to be the first to put out the opposite of what is in fashion. Ayanami's black socks are an example. When it was first broadcast the loose socks were in the middle of a boom. I thought to myself that it would be embarrassing to draw loose socks at a time when they are so popular, so I went the other way and drew black socks. I was rather hesitant at first about drawing something "not in fashion" back then, but I thought that they would suit a character like Ayanami. Now, fashion has caught up with her and you see black socks everywhere and her socks now look common. Seifuku in its basic form has appeal so most people balk at going against the basic norms in design.

Aiura: As a fashion, seifuku has its limitations. Anything that would put off the general public is a definite no-no. It is difficult to develop designs within the limits of what people will accept, but it is an interesting challenge. Loose socks and baggy knit cardigans raised the ire of the general public and were banned from some schools so you don't see them much anymore. Seifuku has now become a symbol of upper class girl's fashion, showing that the definition of "kawaii" changes with each generation.

Sakurai: There is no doubt that seifuku will continue to be an important medium for spreading kawaii culture. It will be interesting to see the result of the collaboration between CONOMi, a company with all the seifuku and fashion culture know-how, and Evangelion, one of Japan's premier anime popular throughout the world. I am looking forward to what this collaboration will bring.

Anno Hideaki's "Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind" Memoirs

- September 18, 2011
- Translation: Riki
- Source: https://ghibli.jpn.org/report/anno_nausica/

This was published in an anime magazine a long time ago, but I really enjoyed the "Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind" memoirs by Hideaki Anno.

Hayao Miyazaki and Hideaki Anno are famous for their teacher-disciple relationship.

Recently, they have visited the earthquake stricken areas together and held charity events, but I think the old story about the making of Nausicaä, when they first met, is not so well known.

The text in the image is not so easy to read, so I transcribed it into words.

Everyone works under a declared state of emergency, just like toys.

Anno: At the first meeting with Mr. Miyazaki, I was so overwhelmed that I couldn't say anything other than, "Yes". I had heard that he was a very strict person, but that was not the true story.

I was at TopCraft (*1) from November 1st to the beginning of February, and I was one of the artists who stuck it out until the very end.

When I joined the company, the "state of emergency" had already been declared, and he was at his desk from 10:00 in the morning until around 1:00 a.m. I thought he was an amazing person indeed.

Anyway, he was really busy and everyone looked like working toys (laughs).

- 1) An animation studio established in 1971 by former Toei Animation producer Toru Hara, and located in Tokyo, Japan. It was famous for the production of Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind and for doing animation for hand-drawn animation titles by Rankin/Bass Productions (New York City, USA). The studio went bankrupt and dissolved on June 15, 1985, essentially splitting the studio in half. Hayao Miyazaki, Toshio Suzuki and Isao Takahata bought the studio while laying off most of its animation staff, changing its name to Studio Ghibli. (Wikipedia)

I drew a few scenes of Ohmu running at the end, and the scene where the Giant God Warriors come out and move.

For the scene where the Giant God Warriors move, if I had to do retakes after the scene was finished, it would have pushed back the schedule by about a week, so I drew a little bit and had he look at it, and we talked about it a lot and kept fixing it.

The Giant God Warriors in the movie do not look like the fossils in the original work, but he seemed to have a hard time grasping the image of them.

I slept at Top Craft while I was working, and when I woke up in the morning and looked at my desk, there was a piece of paper on which he had written today's instructions and complaints about yesterday's drawing (laughs).

In the beginning, I used to speak to him in honorific speech, but when it was getting close to being up, we forgot about that and argued (laughs), so I don't know about him, but I think I was able to do a satisfactory job with him.

What I felt when working with him was that, in addition to the technical aspects, I was greatly influenced by his way of looking at things, his way of thinking, and his attitude of working with stubborn beliefs. In today's world, there is a tendency to feel that it is somehow embarrassing to clearly feel or say out loud what you like, but in such a situation, he is the one who clearly has his own things and continues to believe in his own sincere feelings and post them.

I got the impression that he made "Nausicaa" in a skipping mood, but I believe that Miyazaki's works are "works with a motor curve that appeals to human emotions and physiology, joy, anger, sorrow and pleasure," words without qualifiers, and the "movement" in them is the secret of their long-lasting popularity.

Interview from the romance album

And here is an interview with Hideaki Anno that appeared in the 1984 "Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind" romantic album.

Anno was still young, so his comments are a bit humble.

--How did you come to work on Nausicaä?

Anno: I'm a fan of Mr. Miyazaki's work, and I really wanted to work on Nausicaä. Mr. Takayama (Fumihiko), the director of Macross, used to work at Top (Craft), and he introduced me to Mr. Sakai, the director of the department. I had an audition, and after he saw my original drawings and DAICON video, he offered me the job.

--I heard that you were in charge of the Giant God Warriors scene.

Anno: Yes, I was. But at first, I was shown a storyboard for the aerial battle at the beginning of part B, and was asked if I wanted to do something like that. But then I was told that no one wanted to do the Giant God Warriors scene, so I asked if I could do it, and I said I'd do anything if they'd let me (laughs). Mr. Miyazaki is a good storyteller, so he makes things sound really interesting. First of all, he drew an illustration of the image on the layout paper and showed me, "Giant God Warriors will move slowly while melting into mush, emit smoky steam here and there, and shoot out rays of light twice! There are also explosions! It sounds very interesting when you hear about it. It was only after I started working on it that I realized how hard it was to cut! (laughs).

--How many cuts were you in charge of in total?

Anno: I think there were 35 cuts in total. The last scene with the Giant God Warriors, and the scene where Kurotowa talks to the Giant God Warriors as they grow up in the castle in the Valley of the Winds.

--Did you have a specific design in mind for Giant God Warriors?

Anno: No, I didn't. There were some simple ones, but in the end I designed them myself. But I couldn't draw the people, so I asked Mr. Miyazaki to draw all of them for me (laughs). It was tough, but I would like to work with him again. I couldn't be of much help to him at the time. But I'm afraid he might say, "No, thanks!" (laughs).

Interview from Schizo Evangelion, 1997

A long interview with director Anno. In "Schizo Evangelion," he talks about Mr. Miyazaki.

Anno: For Mr. Miyazaki, this was a great opportunity. There were no animators to draw Giant God Warriors. Just when he was wondering who he could get to do such a difficult job, a young guy showed up.

--It's the most spectacular climax of the film. It's a very important scene, isn't it?

Anno: Yeah, I wondered how he could have let such an amateur do it. When I asked someone who knew him about it later, he said, "How could you let him do it? He wouldn't have let someone with no experience in animation do the original drawings out of the blue". I guess he was really short on staff. They didn't have much time, and I think I was lucky.

--So, there are many stories about it. I heard that you had to do a lot of redrawing from Director Miyazaki.

Anno: Yeah. He said it never crossed his mind that I couldn't draw people.

--I heard that Kushana's part next to Giant God Warriors didn't quite work out.

Anno: Right. I couldn't draw people at all. I specialized in mecha and effects. He didn't think that there was really a type of person who could draw mechanisms but not people. At first, he let me draw all the characters together, but then he started saying things like, "You're not very good at drawing people.", "You're terrible at drawing people.", "You never draw people.", "That's enough. Just draw the symbol! I'll do the rest.", "You're too inexperienced!"(laughs).

In the end, I drew all the Giant God Warriors, tanks, explosions, etc., and only drew rough symbols for the characters. Then he drew the second original. I was super cocky for a rookie (laughs). I was so nervous in front of him in the beginning, but I quit using honorifics in the middle. I guess he liked that I was so stupid and cocky. On the contrary, I was befriended by him.

--Then what did you think when you saw this person, Mr. Miyazaki?

Anno: He's an amazing person for sure. He's my second mentor.

--What do you like most about him?

Anno: It's everything. He's amazing. As an animator, he' s a genius. He has speed, ideas, and technique. He's also amazing in the sense of thought.

--The thought aspect is amazing?

Anno: Yes. Starting from the way of making things and the way of thinking, to the technical aspects. I've been greatly influenced by him.

--Are there any words he said to you that have stayed with you to this day?

Anno: I think it was a quote by Mao Zedong.I think it was Mao Zedong who said that the three conditions for accomplishment are being young, being poor, and being unknown.

He said that if you have all three, you can do it.When we made "Royal Space Force: The Wings of Honnêamise", he supported us in that sense. He said it was a good thing that young people were doing such things.

Interview from Where the Wind Returns

Hayao Miyazaki also commented on Anno in his book "Where the Wind Returns".

This interview was conducted when Anno was a playing around with live action movies.

Miyazaki: I had a huge desire to punish people, but I thought that meant I wanted to become a god. I thought that was a bad idea.

Also, I think "Evangelion" is a typical example of this, in that they don't like people other than the ones they know, and they don't want them to exist, so they don't show them on screen. We have a lot of these elements in ourselves.

If you make a film without letting go of that kind of mood that is brought about by the times and the situation, it will be a terrible film. Rather, I thought that if we don't have a clear focus on people who aren't popular at all, and if we don't question what people are doing, we'll end up in trouble.

That's the difference between Anno and me, I guess. I don't know if it's because I'm getting older or because of my Anpo Protests generation (*2).

- 2) A series of massive protests in Japan from 1959 to 1960, and again in 1970, against the US-Japan Security Treaty, which is the treaty that allows the United States to maintain military bases on Japanese soil. (Wikipedia)

(omitted)

--I read on the website that there are "Evangelion" freaks in Ghibli as well.

Miyazaki: Well, of course there are. There are also "Ghost in the Shell" freaks. I tell them that they are silly. I say, "You should go to that animation studio" (laughs). Yes, there are. Like Disneyland fans.

--How about, your disciple, Hideaki Anno's "Evangelion", from your point of view, Mr. Miyazaki?

Miyazaki: I can't watch it for more than three minutes. It's unbearable to watch.

--It's interesting, isn't it?

Miyazaki: I don't need that kind of thing anymore. Just by looking at the first storyboard, I thought, 'What the hell has he started? (laughs) When I heard the name "Angel", I thought, "This is a terrible place to go into", but I'm glad it's over.

--But according to the website, it said something like "Anno also makes his movies in two parts, poor guy".

Miyazaki: That's because I heard that from Anno himself. He told me about what he went through during the TV series. He was really in trouble, so I told him, "Run away!". He said, "I really don't want to do this," so I told him, "Don't make a movie.".

I know from my own experience what it's like when you've given it all you've got, and then you have to keep doing it for business reasons, so if you really want to keep making things, you should run away.

(omitted)

Miyazaki: Anno is in trouble, isn't he? Even if you start digging a well of self-consciousness, it's just like a snail scurrying around inside a shell, and you already know that once you get to the end, there's nothing there. We already know that there is nothing at the end of the line, so why go around again?

Before making the film "Shikijitsu", we had talked about making an animation here, and we had talked about it a few times, but Anno was about to make the second version of "Evangelion" or die here, and he was thirty-nine years old at the time. And I told him it would be cool to die at 39 after Evangelion.

I said, "If you want to live long enough to enter your forties, you'll have to choose one of two paths: continue making "Evangelion 2" or not, and make a film for someone else.

Then, he ran away to live-action, that bastard. That was just an escape, you know.

Hayao Miyazaki and Hideaki Anno Talk in Sahara

After the match-up between "Princess Mononoke" and "Evangelion the Movie" in 1997, a conversation between Hayao Miyazaki and Hideaki Anno took place.

Director Anno made a surprise appearance while Miyazaki was traveling in the Sahara.

The conversation was broadcasted on TV.

Miyazaki: For me, I don't think it's easy to say what Anno will do in the future, but I feel your greatest strength is to being honest.

Anno: Yeah? (laughs).

Miyazaki: Like how you created "Evangelion", an honest work. You created something that didn't deviate from your personality.

Anno: Yeah, it's ridiculously honest.

Miyazaki: I don't want to dismiss it as something about the "encephalized society" (*3) or the youth of today.

I think it's a good thing that Anno was successful with "Evangelion" because it gives him more opportunities to work and have a say.

Now he just needs to get rid of the ghost of "Evangelion" as soon as possible. It would be unbearable if people kept saying, "Mr. Anno from 'Evangelion'" for the next 10 to 20 years.

- 3) The mechanism of all artifacts is a projection of the mechanism of the brain. People try to cover the world with artifacts in order to free themselves from nature that does not allow them to do as they wish. The world that has been created in this way is the brain society. Its characteristics are as follows.

Establishment of artificial space

Establishment of virtual space

Elimination of nature

Anno: That's right.

Miyazaki: That's why I don't think you should deal with "Evangelion" at all in the future.

Anno: Don't worry about that. I've already come to my senses from my crazy state and regained my identity. So for now, I'm going to do a shoujo manga (laughs).

Miyazaki: You're on the same path as me.

Anno: That's right. I didn't like it when I realized it later.

Miyazaki: That's not very creative (laughs).

Anno: Yeah (laughs).

In a recent interview with Mr. Miyazaki in this year's September issue of Cut, he talks about his conversation with Director Anno on the occasion of the earthquake.

I'm sure that the next one will be the last one for Mr. Miyazaki. Before that, Anno's "Evangelion: 3.0 You Can (Not) Redo" will be released.

I'm looking forward to seeing what kind of stimulation it will give him, what he will say about it, and how he will reflect it in his own work. Perhaps that will be the last time we see the both of them are directors.

Yoshiyuki Sadamoto: Milan Manga Festival (2013)

- Date: July 4-6, 2013
- Translation revised by Joseki
- Source: https://www.animeclick.it/news/36125-milano-manga-festival-reportage-dei-sadamoto-days

On the occasion of the Milano Manga Festival, an event we have already had the opportunity to talk about, the master Yoshiyuki Sadamoto, known for the character design of many GAINAX anime (Honneamise, Nadia, Evangelion) and film by Mamoru Hosoda (The Girl Who Leapt Through Time, Summer Wars, Wolf Children) as well as for the Evangelion manga, which has just ended in Japan.

The staff of the event has certainly focused a lot on the master Sadamoto , dedicating three days of events and a special exhibition to him, with several tables of the manga.

[...]

Finally, on each of the three days a fan meeting was organized in which spectators could ask questions to the master, receiving an answer. Below we have tried to report, in an orderly way and by merging questions similar to each other or on the same topic, what was said by the master Sadamoto on these occasions, plus some of the responses given to fans during the autograph sessions.

Sadamoto's dream was to become a designer, a desire born of his great love for cars, a love that he shares with the whole family. The teacher tells of when as children he and his brother sat on the side of the road challenging each other to guess the brands of the cars that passed. At the time he was very keen to own a LOTUS EUROPA, the car driven by the protagonist of a manga he liked very much, and he is happy to have been able to buy one recently; however it is a very old car, almost 40 years old, so he cannot use it much and it costs him a lot in repairs. Another car he is very attached to is the FIAT PANDA, which he bought with the first money he earned with his drawings; unfortunately it broke almost immediately, but Sadamoto says he is still very fond of her. His dream car, however, is the flying DeLorean from Back to the Future.

Asked about the western influences of his works, Sadamoto states that, despite being a big fan of Pixar and the Thunderbirds , his main inspirations all come from Japanese masterpieces of the past, such as Lupine III - Il castello di Cagliostro or works he loves very much like Ideon, Devilman and Conan, boy of the future.

Among the characters of Evangelion, Sadamoto sees himself a lot in Kensuke Aida, a military otaku who really likes girls, but he also empathized a lot with Gendo Ikari, as, being both fathers of families, he saw himself in his dilemmas, in his parental anxieties and difficulties in establishing relationships with children. He doesn't feel like Shinji in the least.

Asked about his preferences as a designer, however, Sadamotohe says he prefers the older, wiser characters, and he wouldn't mind working on an adult series in the future. He also really likes to draw Misato, more mature than the boys protagonists and that she appreciates both graphically and psychologically; It was also an interesting challenge to work on the design of the angels, as they are strange and difficult to render at their best. Coming out of Evangelion, he had a lot of fun with FLCL where, although he had less freedom due to the very precise directives of the director, he was able to devote himself to all his passions and also took care of mecha design. Finally, he is also very attached to Nadia, as it was his first television job through which he managed to reach a large number of people across Japan and not just anime fans. Still regarding Nadia, he says that Captain Nemo was inspired by both his namesake in Jules Verne's novel 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea and Yamato's Captain Okita. Sadamoto 's working day splits into two parts: first he locks himself in a room alone for twelve hours and thinks about the story, then he travels to Tokyo and draws with his assistants until midnight, to prevent his helpers from missing the last train to go back home; Sadamoto, however, also continues until 3 am. Unlike traditional mangakas, who have to deliver 100 pages a month and then get help from 15 assistants, he has only two assistants, having only 24 monthly tables to make.

On the days off - about 4 per month - he rests by lazing around completely, doing absolutely nothing, in order to recharge. However, remember that in the time of Honneamisehe also had to work for 40 hours straight, since the work rhythms of the animators are even worse than those of the mangaka.

Sadamoto is very happy to work simultaneously on manga and anime, both because he appreciates both - anime as a collective and group work and manga as an individual challenge - and because it allows him to vary between different working methods and different types of works, avoiding so to get bored or tired by always dealing with the same things. It is for this reason that he took a lot of breaks from the Evangelion manga.

In the realization of the characters of Evangelion, Anno left Sadamoto with a lot of freedom, giving him little information, such as the blood type.

As for Rei Ayanami, Anno had requested a cool short-haired character; one day Sadamoto, listening to a song, found himself imagining the character, thus going to Anno saying he wanted to make the character of Rei starting from that voice. Rei was originally thought of as a brunette with dark eyes, however there was a need to distinguish her at first sight from Asuka even in distant shots, thus deciding to draw her with the colors of her eyes and hair reversed compared to Asuka's.

As for Mari, a character present in the Rebuild , they wanted to attract a new type of fan, as well as create an additional character that could be "broken" (in this case the translator was not sure of the word used); Sadamoto also said that he really likes Mari's character, and plans to reuse it in the future.

To a question from the public who asked why the Evangelion 3.0 posters were credited to Takeshi Honda, Sadamoto explained that the original design is his, however after there are other steps before reaching the final result.

When asked about the philosophical complexity of episodes 25-26 of the Evangelion TV series, Sadamoto limited himself to saying that, as a spectator, he considers it a result of the difficult situation in which Anno was. at the time, increasingly tired and on the verge of depression; every time they met he kept repeating that he couldn't take it anymore and that he wanted to end it.

Regarding the exact number of Rebuild films, he said they didn't ask themselves the problem, simply as they define the plot and its complexity the total number of films can increase or decrease.

As for the Evangelion manga, Sadamoto claims to have made it entirely by himself, without consulting with anyone, so any differences with the anime were all decided solely by him; this in contrast to the anime where all decisions were made as a group, all sitting in the same room and arguing.

The making of the manga was a bit of a gamble on his part anyway, as his debut as a mangaka was a failure. In case of further failure, however, it would not have been a big problem for him to go back to work in the family business making porcelain.

His intent was to create a story that would push the reader to commit to overcoming difficulties and not to be discouraged, moreover he wanted, through the characterization of Shinji, to get closer to today's fourteen year olds, not yet trained, insecure, listless and reluctant to commit a lot. His Shinji, however, is "stronger" than that of the anime, almost a bad boy, so much so that immediately he would like to flee where the animated one was much weaker and more insecure. Working on Shinji, Sadamoto also thought back to the Gulf War, in which Japan had served as a base for the American air force, and wondered how a fourteen-year-old would behave at the idea of going to war aboard a helicopter: according to him, he would almost certainly have refused , trying to escape. For this reason, Sadamoto is also convinced that, although the characters of Evangelion are very realistic and it is easy for readers to identify with them - as confirmed to Sadamoto by the readers themselves - it is improper to make comparisons with real characters, as in reality there is no they are fourteen years old forced to fight and save the world.

There has also been a lot of talk about Kaworu's character and his relationship with Shinji, thanks to a specific question asked on the first day by a fan of Boys' Love. After a first attempt by the master to avoid the question, Sadamoto was forced to answer given the insistence of the fan, and then return to the subject also the following days.

First, Sadamoto claims that he does not understand the success of Kaworu's character. Personally, he loved the voice of the character, thus finding himself in difficulty in making it on paper and therefore deciding to modify it compared to the anime. If in the anime he had remained deliberately ambiguous about the nature of his relationship with Shinji, leaving the viewer free to create their own interpretation, in the manga Sadamoto decided to better define everything leaving less freedom to the reader.

In the manga, Kaworu, whom Sadamoto remembers being an angel while Shinji is a human, feels for Shinji a reflection of Rei's feelings, however Shinji rejects him as he is not Rei.

Speaking instead of the scene in which Shinji strangles Kaworu, it is a quote from a film that the master adores: Betty Blue (37° 2 le matin) by Jean-Jacques Beineix, which ends with a choking scene. Asked if that was also a reference to a similar scene in The End of Evangelion, Sadamoto says they are two scenes with different meanings, but does not rule out that he and Anno may have drawn inspiration from the same film. [Note: he hasn't. Ogata says in a 1997 interview from *Evangelion Forever* that Anno took the idea from an experience of a female of acquaintance of his.]

When asked about the current situation of comics and Japanese animation, the master was not too negative in the judgments, considering the manga a still strong medium, albeit slightly decreasing in terms of sales, on which he still wants to work. A possible solution to the "modern manga all the same", as defined by the fan who asked the question, he believes could be to use more writers and more designers for the same work; the comparison between several minds could lead to interesting results, however he does not consider this easily achievable for economic problems. As for the evolution of the issue of incommunicability between human beings, he believes that this has not changed since the time of Evangelion.

When asked what it would be necessary to do, for an Italian, to work, even just as an intern, in a Japanese company of comics or animation, Sadamoto initially advised against this way, as there are many alternatives outside of Japan to work in this environment, so like great foreign artists, Moebius or Mike Mignola, also respected in Japan. But if you really wanted to go to Japan, it is essential not only the knowledge of the Japanese language and culture, but also having a Japanese mentality and being willing to work shifts that are exhausting for our fees.

In any case, Sadamoto says that lately many foreign talents are also having success in Japan, albeit always Asian, and that numerous manga schools are being created specifically for the training of future cartoonists. However, the teacher says he is skeptical about these schools, believing that only 1 graduate out of 100 has the necessary talent to become a true mangaka; instead advises to follow one's own path, whatever it may be, because even a waiter can be born a great artist, and that more than studying drawing - he himself has never studied, he has only read many manga and managed to win an award at his first competition - it is important to know and attend the environment and the people who work there.

A journalist in the audience, interested in the relations between West and East in contemporary pop art, after an excessively long introduction on how there are some authors, such as Osamu Tezuka and Go Nagai considered, more than mere mangaka, real and own contemporary artists, he asked Sadamoto if he also considered himself an artist of this type. Sadamoto replied in the negative, as his only work as a mangaka is nothing more than a reworking of a pre-existing work and that only when he has created an original work of his will he be able to consider the idea; for now, therefore, he does not consider himself absolutely up to the standards of authors such as those mentioned.

Another of those present focused on Wolf Children, which he saw as a praise of country life, where everything is fine and everyone is happy, at the expense of that of the city, finally asking the teacher if he was really convinced of this thesis. Sadamoto first denied that the film wanted to convey this message and then brought his own personal experience as an example: born in a mountain village, he then moved to Tokyo, then moved back to the mountains, managing to be happy in each environment.

After the conclusion of Evangelion, Sadamoto said he wanted to rest until the end of the year, traveling to different countries, such as the USA and Germany. In the meantime, however, numerous projects are in the works, including the next Evangelion film. As for Italy, he was very happy to come back - he was present at a book fair seven years ago - as he loves our country very much and has wanted to visit it since he had seen the film The Italian Job as a child. He said he was a great admirer of our cuisine, nevertheless failing to draw up a ranking of favorite foods being of a good mouth and therefore eating everything. Instead, he was amazed by the composure of the Italian fans, as he expected them to be much more lively and noisy, since when he thinks of Italy he imagines restaurants with a cook who suddenly starts singing; the teacher also observed the big difference compared to Japanese fans who, when they are in front of him or other professionals, cannot even speak so much they are excited and tense.

Hideaki Anno: The success of Gundam was based on Yoshikazu Yasuhiko's original drawings (2013)

- August 1st, 2013
- Translation: Riki
- Source: https://news.mynavi.jp/article/20130801-gft/6

Hideaki Anno talks about the appeal of "Mobile Suit Gundam" and the importance of original drawings.

This is the final part of the interview.

Anno has already pre-ordered the Blu-ray box of "Mobile Suit Gundam".

Advantages of hand-drawn, advantages of CGI Hikawa: But that doesn't mean you want to use CGI, does it?

Anno: CGI has its own advantages. Hand-drawn images have their own merits, and we use them in different ways. The aerial battleship in EVANGELION: 3.0 YOU CAN (NOT) REDO. cannot be done by hand. If you can't do something without CGI, you should do it with CGI. I think that all the mecha should be done in CGI over time. Everything except mecha should be hand-drawn.

But the number of good animators is relatively decreasing nowadays. The momentum of the 70's and the amazing evolution of the 80's were followed by the stagnation of the 90's and beyond for almost 20 years. The level of expression in animation itself has improved, though.

Hikawa: So, Anno-san edited Yasuhiko-san's original drawings, and the book came out.

Anno: It's nice to go back almost 30 years and look at the origin. Something close to the origin. I want people who are currently working and those who want to become animators to have this book.

Hikawa: Mr. Yasuhiko also draws illustrations and cartoons, but I think the true Gundam that he drew can only be found in his original drawings.

Anno: Yasuhiko's original drawings are really cool. I didn't know they could be so cool.

The movement of the Gundam in "Gundam the Movie III" has a wonderful sense of weight and gravity, which is hard to find in other "Gundams". The timing of the walk and the return to normal from the slow speed when fighting the Gelgoog is very pleasing. The way he slashes away, or the way he stabs. It's actually a gamble (laughs).

Hikawa: (In the movie version) it was redrawn as a Gelgoog (laughs).

Anno: The way he dodges the strike and then highlights it when it goes for his ear is really great. Yasuhiko-san was able to trace the human movements onto the mobile suits. It's good that the mobile suits move like humans.

Hikawa: The character of the person in the suit is expressed in the armor, isn't it?

・・・

Some people may think it's strange that a mobile suit can move like a person, even though it's a mecha.

There are probably many people who prefer the more mechanical designs and mechanical movements of the current plastic models.

However, I dare to say this.

One of the reasons why "robot anime" has fallen out of the mainstream of the animation industry is the loss of character.

In the so-called last shooting scene, Amuro was not on the Gundam.

Even so, the fact that we have a special feeling for that scene is proof that Gundam, a robot depicted as a weapon, was at the same time an irreplaceable character.

・・・

Eye contact, misalignment, and CGI. Hikawa: I'd like to talk about the characters' eyes. How about Char's eyes when he and Amuro are fighting in the last episode?

Anno: The eyes are the lifeblood of a character. Not only the characters, but also the eyes of the Gundams drawn by Yasuhiko-san are very good, aren't they? Zaku also has good eyes. The single eye angle. The eyes are drawn with great care.

I can always tell where the characters are looking when Yasuhiko-san draws them. Char is wearing a mask, but you can tell where he is looking. Gundam's eyes don't move, but the eaves make it possible to get a line of sight.

Hikawa: (Looking at the original Gundam drawing) The eyes are a little off, aren't they?

Anno: Yes, it's drawn by shifting it.

That's how the line of sight is created.

With CGI, this kind of shifting and line of sight is quite difficult to achieve.

Hikawa: Why do you think that happens?

Anno: It's because of the way the hand shifts slightly, and since CGI doesn't shift slightly, I have to force it to shift slightly.

Hikawa: If you make this composition in CGI and overlap it with Yasuhiko's original drawing, does it shift?

Anno: That's a good gap; it's hard to achieve with CGI.

Hikawa: With CGI, it's very accurate, I see.

Anno: Like a certain space battleship. I would have preferred it to be hand-drawn (laughs in the audience).

・・・

It is a fact that with the rise of the new CGI technology, the demand for hand-drawn animation is also decreasing.

However, I don't think that animation can continue without hand-drawing. If we don't do something to preserve the techniques, we may end up in a dead end.

Such fears can be seen in Anno's talk. It may be easy for those of us on the viewing side, but I think it is a very serious matter for those on the frontlines.

Hideaki Anno x Kazuo Koike: Osaka University of Arts (2013)

- October 22, 2013
- Translation: 1731298478
- Source: https://togetter.com/li/580471

Kazuo Koike: Today, Mr. Hideaki Anno and I held a discussion at the Osaka University of Arts. About three hundred students attended. We talked together for about an hour and then took questions from the students. It was very good.

Anno: The word "otaku" was born after I started working. At that time it was a term of discrimination.

Koike: Nadia taught children about death.

Anno: The proposal I first recieved from the producers at NHK was basically a version of Laputa. Miya-san had worked on it, so that was inevitable. When I was directing it, I took it seriously precisely becaue it was directed towards children. Death had been hidden [from those children] up until then. Death was all around me when I was a child. I wanted to show that in anime, so I forced it on NHK.

Koike: What do you think is the main reason that Evangelion has become as big as it has?

Anno: I have no idea...

Koike: I don't think you can call Eva robot anime. Robot anime ended with Gundam.

Anno: Eva focused on "man-made human beings."

Anno: From the beginning, Eva was a robot that couldn't be controlled. I thought it would be interesting to have children pilot an uncontrollable robot.

Student Questioner: Eva was filled with thought-provoking scenes, but was there an intention behind them?

Anno: [They were made] on a case-by-base basis. Sometimes it's just a matter of atmosphere. Sometimes it's playing around for fun. But I studied a fair bit concerning psychology. It's more effective if the audience finds what you're doing to be conceivable.

Student Questioner: What genres of anime do you dislike?

Anno: Works that are specifically moe, and horror. I am no good with horror, or with haunted houses.

Student Questioner: Have you thought of the plot for the next Eva film?

Moderator: Ah, no questions concerning works currently in production.

Anno: [The script?] is already finished provisionally, but I am reworking it, rewriting over and over again.

Student Questioner: There's a viewpoint which holds Eva to be a criticism of otaku.

Anno: I'm not criticizing. I'm considering. That might be putting my nose where it doesn't belong for some people.

Student Questioner: What about the final episode of the TV series? You said you dislike moe, but isn't Asuka moe?

Anno: When I did the TV series, there was as yet no such thing as moe. I like Sailor Moon as well. For the TV series, we certainly ran out of time. We had no time for episode 25, so we remade it for the theatrical edition. The final episode, episode 26, was going to be that way originally. In the scene in episode 16 which depicts a conversation between Shinji and the angel, Tsurumaki-san forbade [the angel's use of] Japanese. So due to that, the theme became from then on conversations with oneself, and it ended with the question of how you can come to terms with other people. We did [the finale] in four days. We did the voice recording first, and then drew the storyboards.

Student Question: How was [your time at] the university?

Anno: The best thing was my making friends here. The friends you make at university have a good chance of being your friends throughout your entire life. I ended up not taking the general subject courses. In particular, my level of English was too low. However, the thing I most regret today is not studying English.

Hideaki Anno: "I've made some pretty interesting pieces" (08/2014 Oricon)

- Translation: Riki
- Source: https://www.oricon.co.jp/special/1476/

"The World of Hideaki Anno", a special screening at the 27th Tokyo International Film Festival, was made possible by Toshio Suzuki, the producer of Studio Ghibli, who has publicly stated, "After Hayao Miyazaki, there is no one else!".

This is a rare opportunity to experience the talent of film director Hideaki Anno, which Mr. Suzuki guarantees to be absolutely excellent.

At this time, Anno, a director who rarely appears in the public eye, makes his first appearance in an ORICON STYLE interview!

We took a look back at Anno's roots in his past works, and also took a closer look at Anno's creativity.

The reason why he doesn't comment on the "Eva" series.

--The highlight of the 27th Tokyo International Film Festival, where more than 50 films that he has been involved with so far will be screened all at once. A lot of fans are looking forward to interacting with director Anno at the festival!

Anno: Meeting the creator in person is a good and bad thing at the same time.

For the creator, the work is all that matters, so it would be ideal if our faces never came to mind. However, when I fell in love with a work and delved deeper into it, I was of course interested in what kind of person made it. Of course, I was also curious about what kind of person created the work, so I understand the feeling.

I don't want to destroy dreams and imagination too much. That's why I don't comment on the "Evangelion" series. I want to keep the fun of the fans' imagination.

--When you look back on the lineup, which covers everything from the independent films you made as a student to your latest work, "Evangelion: 3.0 You Can (Not) Redo", what do you feel?

Anno: Some of my works have not been reviewed in decades.

When I look at them after a long time, I can see them a little closer to the audience's point of view, which makes me realize that I have made some pretty interesting pieces. Saying Dictionary: Throw dirt enough, and some will stick!" is the first animation that I drew directly on paper with a sign pen.

When I look back at my works from my school days, I feel like I'm young again. It brings me back to the memories and atmosphere I had when I was making those works, so it's nice to remember how I felt when I was 18 or 9 years old. I'm grateful that I was able to make a full-scale movie as an amateur.

"Royal Space Force: The Wings of Honnêamise", for which I was the animation director, was the work that led to the establishment of my previous company (Gainax). It was a great experience to be able to work on it with my colleagues when I was young.

-- "Neon Genesis Evangelion" was mentioned at the press conference as an unforgettable work, and there are some treasures that you can't miss, such as "The Invention of Destruction in Imaginary Machines," which is being collected for the first time from the Mitaka no Mori Ghibli Museum.

Anno: It was a rare opportunity to see the TV series of "Eva" on the big screen of a movie theater.

One of my most memorable works was "Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind," in which I participated as a staff member, and it gave me the confidence to make a living as an animator in Tokyo.

The first commercial animation I directed, "Gunbuster," and the TV animation I directed, "Nadia: The Secret of Blue Water," were tough, but I'm glad I had the experience when I was young. The experience of directing the live-action film "Love & Pop" also left a big impression on me.

The "Rebuild of Evangelion" series was the first film I made at my own studio, after starting my own company called Color. So I did a lot of new things. Rather than saying, "I want to do this!", I feel like I've just been swept along, so I guess I'm lucky or blessed with people, because I couldn't have done this alone.

The direction in which Japanese animation is heading.

--What are the most memorable encounters you've had in your 35-year career?

Anno: From Ichiro Itano, the director of "Super Dimension Fortress Macross", and Hayao Miyazaki, the director of "Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind", I learned how to create animation. They taught me many technical things, but what impressed me even more was their uncompromising creative attitude. He worked so hard!   I was impressed.

When I was a student, I used to stay awake at my desk when I was concentrating on a project, but my concentration and mental strength lasted all the way to the end of a movie or TV series. Moreover, the more I go to my desk, the more I can maintain the quality of my work. On the other hand, if I don't do the work, the quality will go down. Both of them taught me to work hard to the limit of my physical strength.

--I understand that with the film festival, you want to show more of the fundamental power of Japanese animation to the world?

Anno: I think that Japanese animation is unique even when viewed from a worldwide perspective. I think that Japanese animation is the only one that takes the strange world very seriously.

For example, Disney and Pixar have a popularity that can be understood by people all over the world, but I have the impression that Japanese animation is going in a minor direction, which is not the case with Eva.

But from a global perspective, I think that the soil of Japanese animation, which continues to produce so many works with such enthusiasm, has the underlying strength, or the power to develop into a major player.

At first, I think it will only be accepted by a few fans (even overseas), but I think we can make a breakthrough there.

Just like "UFO Robot Grendizer" was a big hit in France in the 1970s.

Since this is a great opportunity for film lovers from all over the world to gather as dealers, it is important to promote the film as a work of art, but we should also be more proactive in selling it as a product.

In fact, if the economy doesn't grow, the culture won't grow.

Japanese films, whether animation or live-action, are usually local or domestic, but I think there is a possibility that people from all over the world will be interested in them because they are minority works that are only available in Japan.

--This year's film festival is also focused on promoting the appeal of film to the younger generation. Director Anno, who continues to create works that are imprinted in people's memories, both in animation and live-action, would like to give a word of love to the young people?

Anno: "You just watch whatever you can".

Nowadays, I think that many people who like anime only watch anime. On the other hand, people who don't like anime will only watch live action. I think that's fine because it's a preference, but if you watch both, you can create both.

For me, animation, CG, live-action, and special effects are all in the same league. I think of them as the same visual expression. I like images that have pictures, time lines, and sound.

(Text: Kana Ishimura)

(C) DAICONFILM "The Return of Ultraman" Original Story (C) Tsuburaya Productions (C) BANDAI VISUAL/GAINAX (C) BANDAI VISUAL, FLYINGDOG, GAINAX (C) NHK, NEP (C) 1998 Love & Pop Production Organization (C) Color

Composed and edited by Hideaki Anno : Special Screenings "The World of Hideaki Anno" Special Video

https://youtu.be/X_L4o_bLUNw

Megumi Ogata: Q&A Anime Revolution 2014

- Date: August 22-24, 2014
- Source: [7] [8]

This is reconstructed from the two transcripts from above. Ogata attended this conference in Vancouver in 2014.

Who do you think shinji would go out with?

Ogata: “Mr. Kaji! I'm joking [in English]. I believe his heart is still that of a child and would not be able to decide on such matters easily.

Can you describe how it felt acting as Shinji?

I'd say that Shinji was a very new type of protagonist in anime. Up until then when somebody voiced the protagonist their voice was projected as if on a stage. So I'd say Shinji was the first character where the voice of the character was realistically displayed. Directed towards other characters rather than an audience.

While acting as Shinji, what was the hardest thing?

While I was voicing him, everything in his world was going very bad so even I started feeling bad. You could say the sync ratio was at 400%. Most often I didn't want to do anything after voicing Shinji.

As you've been acting as Shinji and hes been growing, does your acting also change with his own growth?

So as my career expands and I also gain experience, the techniques I learn are applied to every voice I do.

You said you had high sync ratio with Shinji, when he got hurt did it hurt you as well?

I don't know if you know but a very square Angel appears and fires a laser to the Evangelion's chest and makes a hole. Around Shinji there's LCL and it fills his veins, Anno asked me to act as if the liquid was burning right inside of me. And so I acted as that as if my chest and throat were burning. I went to the doctor the next day and he said it was as if I had burned my throat.

I'm a big fan and after meeting you I saw you were very feminine and gentle. So Shinji's character is quiet but can be very active, so is it the same thing for you? Being human?

I have many many faces and one of them is Shinji.

[Someone asked who is her inspiration to which she replied: Myself]

Cosplay?

No cosplay. Since I already play characters I don't see the need to go any further.

Do you ever think "I cant run away, I cant run away"?

Whenever I pay the loan for my house.

Is there anything you like in western culture?

Rock and metal music, R&B. Music in general. There's a lot to put into such small words. [Ogata mentioned Disney’s Fantasia as her favourite]

Was there any other character that you found interesting in Eva?

Smiling Ayanami. And angry Asuka.

What do you think about Evangelion's characters?

It's hard to say because they are all very different. I haven't really thought about it. They are different in the TV and movies. So it's a very good question. Sorry.

In the hospital scene? It was very very very difficult.

I asked Gendo's VA: "Good, Shinji".

"What are Shinjis' feelings towards Kaworu?"

Friend friend friend friend. [in English] [One of the few responses that came out of her mouth rather than the translators. Legit "friends" for 3-4 times.]

Hideaki Anno: NicoNico Ultra Conference 2015

- NicoNico Ultra Conference 2015 (April 1, 2015 - April 26, 2015)
- Translated by Riki; [9]; [10]; [11]
- Source: https://logmi.jp/business/articles/53854

Hideaki Anno: "Anime is information. I create with logic." In a conversation with Kawakami, he talks about the theory of anime production.

This is a full transcript of a conversation between Dwango's Takao Kawakami and Hideaki Anno, director of Evangelion, that took place at the Nico Nico Ultra Conference, Super Discourse Area on April 25, 2015. Anno said that "anime is made with logic," and that there is a theory behind every step of the process.

Speakers

Nobuo Kawakami, Chairman and CEO, KADOKAWA and DWANGO Inc.

Ryusuke Hikawa, Animation researcher

Hideaki Anno, President, Khara, inc.

What is the "amount of information in animation"?

Hikawa: Hello everyone. I am Ryusuke Hikawa, animation researcher. Thank you for coming today.

This is the Ultra Discourse booth of the Nico Nico Ultra Conference, and for the next hour we have Hideaki Anno, director of khara, inc. and Takao Kawakami, chairman of KADOKAWA and DWANGO, here to talk about "What is the amount of information in anime? I'd like to have a long talk with them. Thank you very much.

Anno: I'm Anno. Thank you very much for taking time out of your busy schedule today.

Kawakami: I'm Kawakami. This year's event (Nico Nico Ultra Conference) is the biggest ever. Every year the number of visitors increases, so every year it's the biggest ever, and this year it's the biggest ever too!

Hikawa: There's sumo, the Self-Defense Forces, and dinosaurs.

Anno: There's also pro-wrestling.

Hikawa: Anything is possible. Right off the bat, is this the book that inspired the theme of "the amount of information in anime"?   It's a new book by Kawakami-san. It's called "The Secret of Content".

In the table of contents, it says, "What is the amount of information?". So I' d like to talk about that.

Kawakami: Yes, that's right. I was asked by a publisher to do publicity for them. I don't like doing publicity, but I thought it would be interesting to talk with Anno about the amount of information in anime, and if it's in this book, we can talk about further aspects. That's why I planned this meeting today.

Hikawa: In fact, Mr. Anno appears several times in this book, especially in the section titled "Things I thought about at Studio Ghibli", but you started as an apprentice producer, right?

Kawakami: Yes, that's right. I hadn't been working for a long time. I didn't do any work at Dwango, and I was always at Ghibli. I was talking to Mr. Suzuki all the time. I thought about a lot of things while I was there.

I watched anime as a fan, but I had never really thought about how to make anime.

Hikawa: Were you surprised when you went there and entered?

Kawakami: Yes, yes. I wrote about it in the book, but in the field of animation, the word "amount of information" is used by everyone in the field. And "amount of information" is a word that sounds like information theory, isn't it?

Hikawa: Yes, it is.

Heard various stories from Mr. Suzuki of Ghibli.

Kawakami: The reason why this word is used in the animation industry is what first got me interested in the amount of information in animation. There's a lot about it in this book.

Hikawa: So did you use this book to think about the relationship between information volume, creativity, and content?

Kawakami: Yes, that's right. The story that Mr. Suzuki told me about Mr. Takahata, Mr. Miyazaki, Mamoru Oshii, and Mr. Anno.

Hikawa: Mr. Anno also appears in the book, doesn't he?

Kawakami: Anno-san has pointed out to me that there are some mistakes in the book.

Hikawa: Is that so?

Anno: Well, a little.

Kawakami: A little (laughs).

Anno: There are a few things that are wrong here if I had a glance through the book. I don't bother to deny it, but it's wrong.

Kawakami: Hahahahahaha (laughs).

Hikawa: Putting the wrong things aside, have you ever read this book?   What are your impressions of it?

Anno: It's good for people who don't know much about it. It's good as an introduction.

Hikawa: Then is it okay if I read about what you value in anime?

Anno: Yes. I think it's a good way to understand how and why things are done in anime.

It's really a good introduction.

Hikawa: A good "introduction".

Kawakami: Hahahahahaha (laughs).

Hikawa: So it's like you're trying to figure out something that you didn't understand at first?

Kawakami: Yes, it is. It's the result of thinking about what on earth creators do from a scientific perspective.

Stories are also a form of information.

Hikawa: In fact, you said that before you joined Ghibli, you were focusing on the story, as you wrote in this book.

Kawakami: That's right. I thought I was only interested in stories. But when I thought about it more, I realized that I was actually wrong.

Hikawa: What do you think about that?

Anno: But in the case of a video work, the story itself is one of the pieces of information, isn't it? I think that animation is the only way to control how much of the story is shown, given, and felt by the audience.

With live-action, you can't control everything. The good thing about animation is that you can control everything.

Hikawa: Every little detail.

Anno: That's right. When you're thinking about the story, you're controlling the information at that stage.

Whether you want a complicated story or a simple one. I think there is already a certain amount of information there.

Hikawa: Yeah, that's true. What do you think about that, Kawakami-san?

Kawakami: Anno-san is the one who started using the term "amount of information" in the first place...

Anno: There was a lot of talk about it, but when the book Anime Style came out, a friend of mine named Yuichiro Oguro was running the magazine, and he said he was going to start publishing it, so we decided to talk about it as a celebration.

When we were talking about the old Eva, he asked me how the Evangelion anime was made. I think I mentioned that "control of information" was the most important thing.

It was a book that was read by many people in the industry, and I got a lot of backlash for it at the time. "Anime is not information!".

The only person who praised me at that time was Oshii-san.

Hikawa: Oh.

Anno: He thought I was such an idiot, but I was actually smart.

Kawakami: Nowadays, people talk about the amount of information.

Anno: It's become a thing now. Back then, we used to say things like "animation is not like that", "thoughtfullness", and "passion".

Hikawa: "Soul," for example.

Anno: Of course, I think even that is information.

Anime is made with logic.

Kawakami: I think so too. When I see you making content, you're making it in a rather scientific and engineering way, aren't you?

Anno: That's right. Basically, everything is calculated and made. It's interesting that there are sometimes parts that can't be fully calculated.

Kawakami: At the end of the process, it's all about sensitivity, but up until the middle, it's all about calculation, isn't it?

Anno: It is calculation. I mostly make films based on logic.

Kawakami: It's all logic, isn't it?

Anno: It's basically logic. It's good that there are parts that are not theoretical. That's why logic is necessary, isn't it? The image itself is a scientific thing, so it's made with logic.

Montage is also a theory, isn't it?

Kawakami: Well, yes, it is.

Anno: It's so logical that it's called the montage theory. Of images.

Kawakami: When you look at it, the more experience you gain, the more you start to make things based on theory.

Anno: That's right.

Kawakami: When I listen to various people, they say that when they were young, they made films based on their sensibilities, but they just didn't understand the logic they had inside them, and gradually came to understand it. That's what it is, isn't it?

Anno: In the case of video, the first thing you do is connect the pictures. Before editing, you have to decide what kind of picture you want to put in the 16:9 frame. It's called trimming.

After the cropping, there is the editing process, and during the editing process, you have to figure out how to show more of the cropped image, and of course, there is the sensitivity of the viewer, but it is also logic.

There is also the imaginary line. There is a sense of breaking that line, but the audience is confused at that point.

But the audience is confused by that. They are also looking at it based on the same logic. I think that the audience and the person making the video need to share the same logic in order for the audience to understand. The Japanese language is also a theory.

Still have a sense of memory of TV and movies we watched as childen.

Kawakami: But logic is not something that is taught in school, is it? What percentage of the total number of people in the world have a good sense of logic?

Anno: When I was filming something in high school, I didn't really have a theory. I didn't have a storyboard or anything like that, I just thought, "If it comes to this, I want to shoot it like this. When the film came out of the developing process, I thought, "Wouldn't it be interesting if I connected it in this way?

I'm doing this based on my senses, but those senses are not something that I had in my mind originally, but I'm using my memory of how TV and movies I watched as a child were connected like this.

After a picture like this, there was a "leaning" like this. And so on. This time, I think it would be better to go to this kind of "transition".

As I continue to do this, I start to see the logic in it. It may be a logic, but it may also be a routine.

Hideaki Anno says, "I wanted to create an animation with a minimum amount of information," about the animation with only voices and lines in Eva.

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This is a full transcript of a conversation between Dwango's Takao Kawakami and Evangelion director Hideaki Anno, which took place at the Super Discourse Area of the Nico Nico Ultra Conference on April 25, 2015. Anno looked back on the anime expression of only voices and lines in the TV version of Evangelion episode 16 (Sickness Leading to Death, and), saying "I wanted to create images with the minimum amount of information".

Speakers

Nobuo Kawakami, Chairman and CEO, KADOKAWA and DWANGO Inc.

Ryusuke Hikawa, Animation researcher

Hideaki Anno, President, Khara, inc.

The number of children who cannot read manga is increasing.

Kawakami: What I think about is that, for example, in manga, everyone imitates someone else, and as they imitate, their individuality comes out.

To put it simply, everyone imitates what they see, but they can't reproduce it exactly. I think that this blurring of lines is what gives everyone their individuality in the end.

Anno: Then there's the backlash. They say, "This is how you did it, but I would do it this way." Using that as a base, I'd take the idea to another place.

If you've never read manga before, you can't read manga out of the blue. My parents can't read at all either.

Kawakami: It's said that the number of children who can't read manga is increasing these days.

Anno: They don't know how the panels work, or what a bubble is. They wonder why these letters have jagged edges around them. They can't tell if it's an expression of anger or a loud voice.

If you don't know the rules, it's hard to read the text. If it's square, it's a monologue, and if it's shaped like a cloud, it's a dialogue.

Even the flow of a frame. It starts from the right and goes to the right side of the page.

Kawakami: When it comes to controlling the amount of information, in the book "Secrets of Content," the basic theory is that the more information, the better.

When you say it's better to have less information, how do you set your standards for control?

Anno: It's a matter of what I want to convey to the audience the most. In order to convey that, I have to control it.

Kawakami: In other words, too much is not good?

Anno: It's okay to have too much. It's better to have too much when you're trying to cover up what you want to disguise to the audience.

Kawakami: Disguise?

Anno: Right. If there are a lot of people, they will look at a whole cut, right?

Kawakami: Yes.

Anno: The whole group will say, "This cut is amazing.".

Live action is the most difficult to control.

Kawakami: It's said that you should put at least three things in your work. You have to put three things that you like or that catch your interest in one cut.

Anno: Well, I think that the animation (I can Friday by day!) that Tsurumaki (Kazuya) did at the Anime Trade Fair is the best textbook for controlling the amount of information.

Tsurumaki likes to keep the background white, so he doesn't draw too much. It was the same with "Fricli". He doesn't need much information about the background.

He doesn't need much information about the background in order to make the characters stand out. The background only needs to have a minimum of information about where it is.

You don't need more information than that, so he doesn't draw much in it. As long as the characters are cute, that's all that matters.

Kawakami: (laughs).

Anno: He uses the minimum amount of information to make them cute, and he uses a lot of CGI to draw the mechanisms in his mind.

The handles are detailed. Even the pipe chair has a hole in it. He was able to draw and show both the crisp parts and the fluffy parts. That's part of it.

Kawakami: This is part of controlling the amount of information.

Anno: In the case of Eva, there are parts where there's nothing at all, and parts where there's a lot of drawing.

Kawakami: But if you think about controlling the amount of information in that way, today's CG animations are getting closer and closer to realism, but I think it's difficult to control the amount of information in such animations.

Anno: Well, it's getting harder to do. Live action is the most difficult to control. When you try to control it with live action, it's like a stage play.

In a stage play, there are real people acting, but behind them is a set, right? I think it would be like that.

Kawakami: It's like having a set that looks like a stage.

Anno: There are films like that, but there are also films that are shot in places that really look like a stage. In those films, all you need is the characters, the story, and the drama, so as long as you show the information about where the scene is at the beginning, that's all you need.

From the point of view of the director, there are times when he doesn't want to give the audience any noise, and times when he wants to put in a lot of noise to make it hard to understand.

Kawakami: So there are both.

About the animation with only voices and lines in episode 16 of Eva.

Anno: When we were working on the TV version of Eva, I wanted to create images with a minimum amount of information. Just images with voices.

In episode 16 (In sickness unto death, and...), when Shinji and the other Shinji are talking, I wondered what the minimum amount of voice information was.

We were still using film, so when there were no pictures during post recording, we would draw lines on the film. I would draw a red line, and while the red line was showing, Shinji would speak. When there is a blue line, Rei should speak. When the line is black, Misato should speak.

Tell the voice actors, "You for red," and "You for black". And when there is a wave is coming out, you shout. when . There are also six or nine frames at the breath, where the film breaks up. When the line breaks, that's a pause.

That was really an amazing technique. It was really just black lines on a white background. Or the word "dialogue" would appear.

The simplest thing was the lines. I thought that lines alone were the most anime like.

Kawakami: (laughs). But when you look at it, you don't really notice it, do you?

Anno: That was done in the positive, so I think the hardest part was trying to recreate it in the negative.

Kawakami: I see. When it comes to controlling the amount of information, there's a tendency to want to eliminate the amount of information.

But in reality, whether it's live-action or animation, more and more detail and realism sells better, doesn't it?

Anno: There is a tendency to do that. It's as if the more detailed the drawing, the better. There is such a trend, but it's not just about that, is it?

Kawakami: I've been thinking about the reasons for this, and Toshio Suzuki says that people like things that look expensive. I thought that this was the most important decrease for the average user.

I was impressed by the amount of lines in Space Battleship Yamato.

Anno: It was the 80's when drawing became popular in anime. Before that, Yamato was the first. Yamato drew a huge amount of lines.

Hikawa: Especially the main gun of the main character, Yamato.

Anno: That's what impressed me about the first Space Battleship Yamato. The amount of lines. The fact that something with so many lines was moving properly. I was also impressed by the opening cut.

That cut made me want to follow it for the rest of my life.

Hikawa: It's not just a lot of lines, it's something complex.

Anno: Complex things are moving properly.

Hikawa: That's the ...... that started bringing the amount of information into the animation.

Anno: I think that's it. Until Yamato, they were trying to reduce the number of lines. They were trying to simplify it. After Yamato, the lines suddenly increased, didn't they?

Hikawa: That's right. I think the next increase came with Macross, didn't it?

Anno: I had a lot of fun where they were adding lines for Macross.

After Yamato, the lines suddenly increased, didn't they?

Hikawa: That's right. I think the next increase came with Macross, didn't it?

Anno: I had a lot of fun adding lines for Macross.

Hikawa: You're the one involved (laughs).

Anno: I think it was hard for the people who finished the movie, though. At that time, I was happy to write the details. The first Gundam movie also had a lot of detailing, didn't it?

Hikawa: We kept adding more and more panel lines and markings.

Anno: It's like the design of a display or a monitor.

Hikawa: Actually, as an anime fan myself, the first time I heard the word "information volume" was during the 1984 Macross movie "Macross: Do You Remember Love?". I said to a friend of mine, "This has a lot of information," and he said, "What do you mean, the amount of information?" He was puzzled for a moment.

Anno: At that time, animators liked to add lines.

Hikawa: At that time, it was all about lines, wasn't it?

Anno: Lines and shadows, right?

Hikawa: So the culture of Studio Nue is also involved. Studio Nue, the people who added more lines to the design.

Anno: When Gundam was released, there were single and double shadows in theaters, right?

The sound of "The Wind Rises" is 1.1 channel.

Kawakami: Is there a certain amount of information about movement?

Anno: The amount of information about movement hasn't changed much. It's just that the amount of information about what is moving has changed.

Kawakami: When something difficult is moving, the overall amount of information increases.

Anno: Also, the pleasantness of movement is a part of the amount of information. It feels good to move.

Kawakami: Are there more sounds as well?

Anno: Sound has also increased. In the past, it was mono, then stereo, then Dolby, and now it's 5.1 or 7.1, so there are suddenly sounds coming from behind you. The sound information has also increased.

Mr. Miyazaki's previous work, "The Wind Rises," was deliberately made into a 1.1 channel. "The sound is already too loud. It should just come out of the middle of the screen," he insisted.

I understand this. He said, "There is only one screen, so why is the sound coming out of the other part? It's distracting.".

I also think that one channel is fine, but it's difficult to synthesize sounds with one channel. I want to spread them out a bit. Considering the performance of sound, I think it would be good to have 7.1 channels.

Especially for a spectacle, it would be nice to have a lot of sound coming from behind to surprise the audience.

Kawakami: You'd be surprised, wouldn't you? When it comes out of nowhere from behind.

Anno: Even if you can't use it every time, I think it's good to use it to create a surprise at the right moment.

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This is a full transcript of a conversation between Dwango's Takao Kawakami and Evangelion director Hideaki Anno, which took place at the Super Discourse Area of the Nico Nico Ultra Conference on April 25, 2015. Anno recalled that when he watched the final episode of the TV version of Lupin the Third by Hayao Miyazaki in real time, "it looked like a live action movie" due to the realism of the background. He talks about the "amount of information" in animation.

Speakers

Nobuo Kawakami, Chairman and CEO, KADOKAWA and DWANGO Inc.

Ryusuke Hikawa, Animation researcher

Hideaki Anno, President, Khara, inc.

The characteristics of Ghibli animation in terms of "amount of information".

Hikawa: From your point of view, how does Studio Ghibli compare to Studio Color in terms of the amount of information?

Anno: Miyazaki-san doesn't put much effort into compositing, does he?

Hikawa: Oh, he does everything by drawing and layout already?

Anno: He's trying to recreate the film era in digital form. It's hard to go further than that, but I want to go further than that. Since it's digital, I want to do something that can only be done digitally.

Hikawa: It's true that in "The Wind Rises", there was almost no filming process, and from the beginning to the end, people kept telling us that if the backgrounds and the drawings were done properly, we wouldn't be able to take our eyes off the film, and we, the viewers, were like, "Wow, you're totally right.

Anno: I think that's fine. In the case of Ponyo, he cut back on a lot of things, didn't he?

Hikawa: We used all cells for that one too.

Anno: Ponyo was aimed at children, so I think they decided that it would be too difficult to use too much information, so they reduced the amount of information. There were very few lines. Even so, the cars and other objects were well drawn. Mr. Miyazaki has always been very good at using different techniques like that.

It's amazing to see drawings of Gigant and drawings of Conan, both of which are just outlines with no shadows.

Hikawa: It's not simply a matter of quantity, but rather a matter of contrast.

The final episode of the TV version of Lupin "looked like a live action movie."

Anno: It was the TV version of Lupin that he started systematically drawing in.

Hikawa: The last episode?

Anno: I think Miyazaki-san started a lot of things with that episode. He made the background more realistic.

Hikawa: That's one piece of information, that the place looks like the actual Shinjuku.

Anno: When I saw it on TV in real time, the monitor was accurate, but when I looked at it, it looked like a real picture. I thought, "This is amazing. That battle scene in Shinjuku was really well drawn.".

Kawakami: I've heard about controlling the amount of information like that in the world of animation, but is there any such concept in live-action?

Anno: There are people who do that in live-action, but it depends on the person. But in the case of live-action, the good thing about live-action is that it cuts out what's actually there, so the amount of information is controlled according to the camera frame, whether it's a subtraction, middle picture, bust shot, or close-up.

Kawakami: So there aren't many ways to control it in live-action?

Anno: That's right. The size of the picture and the length of the film. These are the good thing about video is that you can control the time. That's what I like about it. Especially with animation, you can even control the time. You can control the timing yourself. With live-action, it's hard to go that far. I've tried to make it look like animation by removing the inside of the frames, but it doesn't work as well as animation.

The good thing about animation is that you can freely change the time.

Why does Anno shoot live-action films?

Kawakami: But when you talk about the amount of information like that, it sounds like it would be better to do everything in animation.

Anno: If I control everything, I can't come up with anything beyond what I'm thinking. That's why I tend to come up with more than what I have in mind when I do live-action. It's in live-action that the unexpected comes out.

Kawakami: Does it widen your range?

Anno: It also widens the range. There are good points and bad points. It's interesting to do both.

Hikawa: To use a metaphor, live-action is like hunting, where you have to take a gun and collect your prey, or set traps and collect materials, and then process what you've collected.

Kawakami: It's called "location hunting" and it's all about hunting, isn't it?

Anno: Kurosawa would wait for a week for good skies. He would say, "The skies aren't good today either," and leave it at that until his prey arrived. I'm sure there are people who are particular about such things in live-action as well.

Kawakami: In order to control the amount of information, in the case of live-action, you wait for your prey to arrive.

Anno: You wait and create.

Hikawa: But nowadays, with CGI, that's becoming more and more delicate.

Anno: Well, that's not a good thing. They put off everything until later and say, "CG will do the rest.". Even if there's a problem on the spot, they say, "Let the CGI take care of it.". More and more work is being concentrated on the post-production side.

Hikawa: There are some things that can't be put in the same category as the live-action films of the past.

Anno: It's like animation. That's what Oshii-san was talking about before. "All movies are going to be anime." That's true.

Overseas cinematography is dominated by acting with CGI partners.

Kawakami: I once went to visit a movie set over there (overseas), and I was really disappointed at how crappy it was. I was very disappointed to see how crappy the place was before it became a movie.

Anno: That's the way it is now. Everyone does it in front of a green or blue background. It's almost like that now.

Kawakami: It looks like they're having a school arts festival. It's like, how can this be a Hollywood movie?

Hikawa: Some of the actors would say, "I can't act in green" and leave.

Anno: Well, I understand the feeling. Nowadays, that's the mainstream.

Hikawa: On the other hand, if you can't do that, you can't act.

Kawakami: In reality, you are fighting without an opponent, right?

Anno: Yes, that's what happens when the opponent is CGI. It must be tough for the actors.

Kawakami: It's tough, isn't it? For the actors, you don't know if it's really okay until it's done.

Anno: That's true nowadays. I don't think the filmmakers know what the screen will look like until it goes through compositing. The only people who have a complete picture are the people in the compositing department or the director. The only people who can visualize the finished image are the people in the compositing department or the director.

Kawakami: So the cameraman doesn't have an image of the film anymore, he's just creating the material.

Anno: That's right.When live-action CGI is added, it becomes a material shoot.

Kawakami: So the person who does the final compositing is doing something similar to the director?

Anno: He's more like a cinematographer. Everything is decided by compositing. Nowadays. The colors can be changed, and even the lighting can be changed in extreme cases. You can really change color contacts and other things at the compositing stage. On the other hand, I don't think we can spend that much money in the field anymore, so we just make do with what we have.

Kawakami: Compositing and shooting are the same thing.

Anno: In the case of animation, the trend is the same, so we call compositing "shooting".

Kawakami: In animation, everyone says "shooting" and "by shooting," but It's like, what is shooting? I mean, isn't it just capturing the cels?

Anno: Well, there are no cels. I think that's already an industry term.

Hikawa: You mean compositing, right? There's a stage where the materials are combined into one final piece, but that's practically the biggest part of the production in anime, isn't it?

Anno: Nowadays, the compositor is the hardest part.

Mr. Kawakami: Anno's storyboards are easy to understand.

Hikawa: I think you saw the work of two masters at Ghibli, Mr. Miyazaki and Mr. Takahata. What do you think are the differences between them?

Kawakami: Differences? I haven't seen that much of the work. I don't know much about the work itself, like the way it's drawn. It's very difficult to understand the storyboard and how and where in the storyboard they are drawing the pictures.

Hikawa: But you said that Anno's storyboards were easy to understand.

Kawakami: It was easy to understand. You know, I could understand the flow of the story by looking at the written words, so it was easy to understand.

Anno: If you put too much of that in the storyboard, the story will be more interesting. To make it more interesting than the storyboard, it's better if the storyboard is boring to some extent. But the animators need to be motivated. The most important part of the storyboard is to motivate the staff.

It should be a minimum blueprint while motivating the staff, such as, "This is interesting," or "This will be more interesting if it's done this way.".

Kawakami: So you make the storyboards interesting in order to motivate the staff?

Anno: Yes, that's right. I deliberately don't draw much, for example.

Kawakami: That's right. Anno's storyboards are very vague. He wrote things like, "Make it look cool". Like, "Make it look cool. There are some things that are very vague, aren't there?

Anno: Yes. If there's an animator who can handle it, I'll do it. If it's been decided that this person will do it, then it's basically better to leave it to the animators. It's all about control. As I'm sure Miya-san (Hayao Miyazaki) is doing, the skills of animators differ greatly, so the only thing I can do is to say, "If this person comes, I'll make this kind of cut, and if no one else is good enough to do it, I'll make a picture that doesn't rely on the animator.".

Live action is for actors, animation is for animators.

Kawakami: In other words, it's like a cut where even if you're not very good at it, you can still get most of the results?

Anno: No, I mean to make the work interesting even if the pictures are out of control. It's the same when I cut back and forth from a stop motion picture. There are many ways to make things more interesting. For example, if the movement of the Eva here is great, then I'll just use this part of the stop motion picture instead of the interesting movement of the Eva there. The interesting part of the stop motion picture. I think that's the part of animation where you have the most freedom.

Hikawa: It's like asking an actor to play a role. Is it similar to that?

Anno: If this actor is going to play the main role, then we'll make a movie like this. That's what it's all about, isn't it? The animators are the actors, aren't they?

Hikawa: Both cameraman and actor.

Anno: That's right.In the case of hand-drawn animation, the animators are still doing the main parts. They have the most important part.

Kawakami: In the case of live-action films, they become actors, don't they?

Anno: Both actors and cameramen. The director has to be able to motivate the crew.

Kawakami: So, in the case of live-action films, the director needs to know how the actors are going to perform in order to be able to do the actual work.

Anno: There are directors like that, and there are also those who just leave it up to others to make the film. Some people say, "Well, maybe if you make this part a little more interesting," while others tell you to follow his image exactly. It all depends on the director. In film, the director is the only person who doesn't have to do anything.

Kawakami: That's right. That's what Mr. Suzuki (of Ghibli) said, too.

Anno: Directing video really doesn't require you to do anything.

Anno: A visual director really doesn't have to do anything. On the contrary, you can go as far as you want. As long as you have a camera and a director, all you need is a subject, and you can make a video work.

Hikawa: There are films like that, aren't there? Like when the director disappears in the middle of a film.

Anno: Somehow, even if the director disappears, the film can still be made. The director's job is just to take responsibility. That's what it is in the extreme. When someone asks, "What do you think, director?" you just say, "OK," or "Let's do it again.". "Theoretically, anyone can be a director as long as he or she remembers these two phrases.

Kawakami: It's like being a conductor at a concert.

Anno: It may be similar to being a conductor, but I don't know much about the work of a conductor, so I can't really compare the two, but I think it's easier to be a film director. If you take it to the extreme, anyone can do it.

Kawakami: I see. But you have to manage the whole process.

Anno: That's done by the producer.

Kawakami: Is that the producer's job?

Anno: A director really doesn't have to do anything. I've seen many directors like that. It's a bit of a misnomer to say that there are many.

Kawakami: I also learned that a producer doesn't have to do anything to be a producer. Producers may be similar to directors.

Anno: But in that case, you have to get the money, right?

Kawakami: If you have money, you can become a producer.

Anno: Directors don't have to get money either. There's even less work.

Hand-drawn animation ends when the staff runs away.

Hikawa: Also, Mr. Kawakami, you have done CGI animation, "Ronia, the Robber's Daughter". I'd like to ask you about the amount of information related to it. Did you feel the amount of information when you worked on Ronia compared to the hand-drawn animation?

Kawakami: Yes, I did. It seems that computer lines have less information for humans. They're so accurate that even if the number of lines is the same, the picture will look flat and boring. Goro (Miyazaki) did a lot of work on how to increase the amount of information to cover that up.

Hikawa: The accuracy of CGI has been talked about several times, and Space Battleship Yamato would be amazing if it were drawn, but when the same thing is done with CGI, it somehow looks less powerful.

Anno: Nowadays, there is software that makes the lines look hand-drawn. There is a movement to make up for the weaknesses of CGI, but there are still areas where hand-drawing is superior.

Kawakami: I was thinking that CGI is more like a factory. With hand-drawn work, if you work hard, you can make it. But with CGI, I had to work on the schedule many times, and I really felt that if I couldn't do this, I wouldn't be able to make an animation.

Anno: Oh, I think it's the other way around. CGI fills in the picture, so I think I can manage. With hand-drawn work, if the animators run away, that's the end of it.

Kawakami: But that's exactly what I thought this time too. When I was making Ronja, some of the technical staff almost ran away, and I felt like there was nothing I could do.The number of pictures that can be drawn is proportional to the number of art staff and their time. It was already proven that we couldn't do that no matter what we thought.

Anno: Hand-drawn work requires more manpower. I think the rate of blank spaces is higher with hand-drawing, but in the end it takes a lot of people to fill them in. It's a process of filling in the picture and then maintaining the quality.

It's really hard to make something. It's even harder when you want to do it right. It's a lot of work just to make something, but when you have to make it right, it's really hard.

Hikawa: What you just said reminded me of something. When I asked Anno-san about Eva before, I asked him what he would do if the finished product wasn't exactly what he expected (because of time constraints). As mentioned in the "Secrets of Content" section, if it's not finished properly, you reduce the amount of information. Can you explain that in detail?

Anno: What did say about it?

Hikawa: If it wasn't drawn well, you'd cut out the animation.

Anno: Yeah, I'd make a stop motion picture. In this case, I'd just do my best on the first stop picture and manage the rest.

Hikawa: It's like erasing the information about movement.

Anno: I also redraw the story from the storyboard, like in the case of Nadia episode 34. When there's nothing I can do. I'd redraw a storyboard that could be done in two weeks.

Kawakami: So it's faster that way.

Anno: The quality is better that way. It was really hard for me to have it aired, so I decided to redraw the storyboard and make it a little more decent. Well, that's how it goes.

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This is a full transcript of a conversation between Dwango's Takao Kawakami and Evangelion director Hideaki Anno, which took place at the Super Discourse Area of the Nico Nico Ultra Conference on April 25, 2015. According to Anno, Hayao Miyazaki's works are most interesting in his "storyboard" state, and he said that the intervention of other people in the process of creating the animation diminishes the Hayao Miyazaki element.

Speakers

Nobuo Kawakami, Chairman and CEO, KADOKAWA and DWANGO Inc.

Ryusuke Hikawa, Animation researcher

Hideaki Anno, President, Khara, inc.

My favorite of Hayao Miyazaki's works is the manga version of "Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind".

Kawakami: But from what I've heard, the public image of you is that you're always running as fast as you can and keep making things until you run out of steam, but you also make a lot of compromises, don't you?

Anno: I think the most stressful thing for a director is compromise. There is no such thing as 100% satisfaction. It's impossible.

It's all about making the film look better than it is, and trying to get it to a reasonable level. I think that's what both Mr. Miyazaki and Mr. Takahata are all about. Especially Mr. Miyazaki.

The best part of Mr. Miyazaki's work is always his storyboards.

Kawakami: Yes (laughs).

Hikawa: (laughs).

Anno: The storyboards are the most interesting. It's 100% Mr. Miyazaki. The ratio of Hayao Miyazaki goes down in the process of turning a storyboard into a film.

Other people inevitably intervene. That can't be helped. When I look at it later, I always think that the storyboard was more interesting.

My favorite work by Mr. Miyazaki is the "Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind" manga. That work is 100% composed by Mr. Miyazaki. Because it' a manga.

Kawakami: It's only drawn by Hayao Miyazaki.

Anno: That's why I think the Nausicaa manga, which is 100% Mr. Miyazaki's work, is so good.

Kawakami: When Anno-san showed me his storyboards, I thought they were really interesting, but with Anno-san, things that are interesting come out as something different, even though they are interesting. When it's finished.

Anno: That's right. People who can read storyboards create the images in their minds based on their own timing and preferences.

That's why when I read Mr. Miya's storyboards, I end up with Hayao Miyazaki's masterpiece in my mind. I have an idea of what I want the timing to be like, what the picture should look like here, and what the movements should be. I could kind of see it.

But when I saw the first screening, I thought, "No, that's not how it was supposed to work. It's like that.". That's how it is.

Sometimes there are good animators, so of course there are many cuts that are better than what I expected.

But when I look at the total picture, I think the storyboard was better. Also, the sound comes in.

I intentionally made the storyboard less complete.

Kawakami: So, in your case as well, Anno-san, is the storyboard the most complete?

Anno: In my case, I make the storyboard less complete.

Kawakami: You make it less complete?

Anno: I only put the elements of fun into the storyboard. People who read the storyboards think it's interesting, but the direction of how to make it interesting changes depending on the animator.

Kawakami: So it's all about the material?

Anno: In my case, I want the storyboard to be the hub for the creation of the work. It's not a blueprint. In Miya-san's case, the storyboard is a rough sketch of the finished work.

Rather, I want to leave room to make things more interesting, like, "Wouldn't it be interesting if this and this were connected like this?".

Kawakami: That's right. Mr. Miyazaki can basically create the same thing as a storyboard. On the other hand, Anno-san's work changes like a living thing, doesn't it?

Anno: I want to keep changing. This is where I'm completely different from Mr. Miyazaki. I don't want to create an image screen at the beginning, because then I can see where I'm going.

Instead, I want to explore until the very last minute, saying, "I don't know how it's going to turn out, but I think it should be this way or that way.". Well, it's a lot of work.

I'm working on the first previews to the point where IMAGICA (a Japanese post-production company for movies, television programmes and commercials, etc.) says, "We can't wait any longer.".

Kawakami: I was thinking, though, that you're trying to make it until the very last minute, so that's why you're making it until the very last minute, isn't it?

Anno: Yes, it's because I'm trying to make it until the very last minute. And that makes post-production more difficult.

But it's worth it because the screen is worth the last minute effort. "At the last minute, I want to add a little shade here."

Even just adding a little subtle shade around the feet makes a difference. It's really a small detail, but when I'm creating, I want to pay attention to that little detail.

Content can be represented as ramen.

Hikawa: What do you think? Kawakami. I'd like to ask you again about "Secrets of Content". I'd like to ask you if there is anything you feel about the amount of information in anime now that you've talked about it.

Kawakami: This book is very interesting.

Anno: It's interesting.

Kawakami: I don't think there's ever been a book like this before.

Hikawa: I've always said that if the only thing that matters is the story, there's no need to make such a complicated anime, so I'm very grateful.

Kawakami: When I was writing this book, I thought that everyone doesn't understand. Creators don't know what the end result will be, and the viewers don't really know what they're looking at.

I really thought that the relationship between fans and creators is one of communication between people who don't understand each other.

Hikawa: Oh, I see. Everyone is different. We all look at things differently.

Anno: That can't be helped. Things can only be measured by the experience and knowledge of the person watching. It can't be helped that it all depends on the person watching. It depends on the person's sense of value.

Kawakami: People often say that works of art don't belong to the creators, but to the individual readers. I think that's true in principle.

Anno: As I often say, it's just like a ramen shop. It's up to the customer to decide what kind of ramen they want to eat, but they can choose whether they want soy sauce or tonkotsu.

It is up to the customer to decide if the tonkotsu oil is too greasy or not. As the owner of a ramen shop, I would say that this level of oil is delicious, but whether the customer finds it tasty, rich, or weak is up to them. There's nothing I can do about that.

To those who find it delicious, I say, "Thank you very much," and that's it.

It's an interactive medium, and I think that's one of the good things about video. You don't have to think about the customer any more.

I think it's hard to provide a better service than that. After all, this is a service industry.

The only way to make it is to make it so hard that it shortens your life span.

Kawakami: But you're making works that serve all kinds of people, aren't you?

Anno: There are services for various people, and there are services that are extremely limited to just this person. I divide them up.

Kawakami: Do you also have services for yourself?

Anno: I don't really have a service for myself. I don't have any, so it's hard.

Kawakami: So it's tough?

Anno: It's tough. I feel like I'm "returning the favor of the vine" (*1). I'm cutting my own body. I'm cutting myself to make textiles. When I realized, there is nothing left.

- 1) An old Japanese story. A crane is rescued by a man, who transforms her into a beautiful woman and becomes his wife, but he sees her weaving on a loom by pulling out her own feathers, so she leaves for the mountains.

Kawakami: Anno-san really puts more effort into his work than anyone else, doesn't he?

Anno: I don't think it's just me, though. That's the only way I can make it, so I can't help it.

Of course, there are times when I try to make things easier, but in the end, I can't. Even if I try to cut corners at first, I end up working until the very last minute.

I can't help it. It's just my nature.

Kawakami: I've been asking a lot of people when the next Eva (Evangelion) will be completed, but the information I get from Anno is the most wrong (laughs).

It's the furthest thing from the truth, and as you get further away from Anno, the more accurate it becomes. Fans' predictions on the Internet are usually the most accurate (laughs).

The diversity I felt at the "Japan Anime Trade Fair".

Hikawa: (laughs). I'd like to talk about the "Japan Anime Trade Fair" that the two of you are working on.

Kawakami-san, how did you come up with the idea of this trade fair, and what do you think of the finished product?

Kawakami: Well, it's amazing. I mean, it's done so freely. When you look at most commercial works, you can usually tell what they're aiming for.

It's not that I don't know what the aim of the anime (eater) works are, but they're all works that make me think, "Oh, that's it!".

Hikawa: What about you, Anno? There're a lot of works already there.

Anno: There's not a single work in the same series.

Hikawa: That's impressive.

Anno: There is still a lot of diversity.

Hikawa: It's really amazing how many different things can be done with animation.

Anno: It's available on the Internet, so please have a look.

Kawakami: The shorter it is, the more pure it becomes. And what you're trying to do.

Anno: Everyone is really very different from each other. Even if the same director does it twice, it's still very different, so I think it's really interesting.

Kawakami: It just goes to show how little freedom there is in the production environment nowadays, doesn't it?

Anno: Well, that's true. The pictures, the stories, the world view, everything is all different. I think that's fine.

Hikawa: In that sense, from the perspective of today's topic, the amount of information, it seems a little chaotic or confusing. There's too much information all around.

Anno: Well, in the case of animation, I think it's good to be able to control the colors as well. Imaishi (Hiroyuki) did a piece (Sex & Violence with MACHSPEED) that used only three or four colors. He was able to achieve such a level of expression with that.

Well, if you put it that way, manga is also monochrome. It's possible to express that much of the world in just black and white. I think that's what makes animation so interesting.

"Ochibisan," which took less than a year to make by hand.

Kawakami: Regardless of the method of expression, the amount of information in this work is like a "lump".

Anno: Well, yes, it is. It's a mess.

Kawakami: (laughs).

Hikawa: Some were full CGI, others were just line drawings.

Anno: And then there are the stop motion ones.

Hikawa: That's right. Stop-motion animation, for example.

Anno: In "Ochibisan", we really made things like tea cups and handy fans.

Hikawa: Like 800 or 900 of them.

Anno: The falling leaves were also made by moving them one by one. I think you can feel that energy from the screen.

Hikawa: Then, what is the amount of information on the screen where you're working so hard on each of the fallen leaves?

Anno: There's the detail of each fallen leaf, but it's also the fact that each of them is moving, and you can feel the manual work. It's about whether or not you can feel what's behind the picture.

Hikawa: Is it like there's a person behind it?

Anno: I think it's good to know that there is something beyond the manual work. I think it's important to see if the soul of the person is in the screen.

Kawakami: Mr. Takahata's "The Tale of the Princess Kaguya" looks like an extraordinary work with a tremendous amount of information to the people who are actually making the animation. But ordinary people think, "I guess that's about right.".

Anno: When you're on the set, you can really feel how hard it is. "Wow, that's amazing! "But for those who don't understand it, it just looks like a picture of hard work. There's nothing I can do about that. Each person is different.

Kawakami: Because there are so few pictures, ordinary people might think that it's easy.

Anno: That's a lot of work.

Kawakami: They can't see the effort behind it.

Anno: I wonder how the difficulty of that can be conveyed from the screen, but I think Mr. Takahata doesn't want to convey that.

Kawakami: He doesn't think it's necessary to tell people.

Anno: So I think he cuts off the information. One of the good things about animation is that the creator can control how much he wants to convey. It's deliberately made to look easy.

Kawakami: When you look at stop-motion, there's something strange about it, isn't there.

Animation is easy to put your soul into.

Anno: I think a lot of people think that Ojibisan is CGI when they see it. I don't think you think they're making tea cups one by one.

They were really making the tea cups and handy fans one by one. They also moved each item in the bento box one by one. They make it out of things that can be eaten. That attention to detail...

Kawakami: It's important that you can see the grains of rice in the bento, isn't it?

Anno: That's right. You can see that it's made of ingredients. I think that's the beauty of it. I think the audience can feel what's behind the screen.

I think there's something in there. In the case of animation, it's easy to put your heart and soul into it.

In the case of live-action films, if the actors really put their hearts and souls into their performances, the audience can feel it. I think it's great that there is a technology in video that can capture that kind of spirit, and a technology in video that can convey it.

The soul of the creator can be reflected in the images. I think that's the beauty of video. If you break it down, you end up with information.

Quantity is the total image, right? It's about how much of the creator's soul can be supported.

Hikawa: Is it something like weight?

Anno: It includes weight. I think there is such a thing as heavy and light. I think that information can be heavy or light. It's not just about how much or how little.

Hikawa: Isn't there also the question of how much resonance it has?

Anno: That's right. There's also the question of how well they resonate. It's complicated and interesting. That's why images are so interesting.

Hikawa: We're getting close to the end of the interview, but with that in mind, I was wondering if you could give us a few words about what you want to make in the future.

Anno: Yes, that's right. I've been doing this for a long time, so I don't think anything will change at all (laughs). From now on and up until now. I don't think what we do will change.

Hikawa: What about you, Kawakami-san?

Kawakami: Everyone should buy the book "Secrets of Content"! Please buy it! I was writing this until the very last minute, and I finished the manuscript about a week ago.

So it wasn't advertised at all, and it was shipped without any promotion at all. I was happy with the result, but I felt sorry for the publisher.

Hikawa: So, if you're interested, please buy it. I think it's time to end this interview. Thank you very much for your time today.

Let's have a big round of applause for both of you!

(Applause from the audience)

Sadamoto: Japan Expo 2015

- Source: https://www.fumettologica.it/2015/07/japan-expo-2015-ventennale-evangelion/

Yoshiyuki Sadamoto, character designer of the animated series Neon Genesis Evangelion and author of the manga, was the guest of honor for the anime section of Japan Expo 2015, also due to the fact that this year marks the twentieth anniversary of the airing of the first episode. And that's not all: 2015 is the year in which the events of the 1995 series are set.

On Saturday, July 4, Sadamoto was the protagonist of a long meeting with fans, in which the floor was given to the public: the opportunity to ask questions in the round ... except on any ongoing projects, of course. A limitation dictated, first of all, by a very specific need: the confidentiality around Evangelion: Final, the next film in the Rebuild of Evangelion tetralogy. The press silence also concerned Blue Uru, the planned sequel to The Wings of Honneamise; on this Sadamoto clarified, however, that the silence does not derive from specific confidentiality clauses, but more simply from the fact that there is still nothing definitive about this project.

As expected, the questions asked by the audience were mainly about Evangelion, with some digressions about 'old' successes such as Nadia or, more generally, about the path that led him to work at Gainax (message to Italian Sadamoto-fans: you can read the full text of the conference in a future article).

About Evangelion, the author first of all answered the questions of the readers interested in its genesis, recalling that the work for that project started after a rather critical period for Gainax, despite the success of Nadia, and Sadamoto was chosen to write the manga. He went on to point out how, at the time, there was no friction over character design development between him and Hideaki Anno, director of the animated series. "Everyone had a lot of creative space," Sadamoto said, pointing out that it was "very different from the work faced, for example, on Summer Wars with Mamoru Hosoda." In this case, in fact, the director put a lot of pressure on him because he needed definitive drawings to allow for the advancement of the writing of the story.

To define the characters of Evangelion, Yoshiyuki Sadamoto said that he had 2/3 months of time. He had identified a female protagonist, sexy and intelligent, and originally wanted all the characters to have very Japanese traits; then a sponsor expressed the desire to produce a video game, and it became necessary to make strong choices, with contrasts between different colors, to distinguish the characters. It was precisely in this context that the choice matured that led, for example, to the visual contrast between Asuka and Rei, the first with red hair and blue eyes, the other exactly opposite in her choice of color. When asked which Evangelion character he likes best and which he likes least, Sadamoto declared his preference for the character of Misato, above all for age reasons ("I wouldn't mind going out with her!" he joked), while the protagonist he likes least is Lorenz Keel, head of Seele.

The work on the Evas, on the other hand, is the one that took the longest - about 10 months of recurring exchanges with mecha designer Ikuto Yamashita. The Eva are modern reinterpretations of the images of oni, traditional Japanese demons, and are different from the mecha of other series of the past, such as Gundam. A small graphic curiosity, finally: the Evangelion were the first successful characters to sport horns pointing forward, as well as for reasons related to make the appearance threatening, to pay homage to the Eastern tradition

As in meetings with fans during other festivals and fairs, it was then time for questions about Sadamoto's well-known passion for cars (for example, it's common knowledge that the Renault Alpine A310 driven by Misato in Evangelion is the author's tribute to Lupin III, where a Renault Alpine A110 can be seen in a chase). But even more than certain Renault models, Yoshiyuki Sadamoto has admitted to being a big fan of Citroën cars. As he said, he owns several of them, including a 2CV and a Xantia; and a few days before Japan Expo, he took advantage of his stay in France to visit a car dealer..

On the dual career between anime and comics, Sadamoto - already in charge of design in several other series - has said he is now less and less suited to animation, which requires a lot of speed. It's not for nothing that his last job as animation director dates back a decade ago, with the first episode of the OAV series Aim for the Top 2! [Diebuster / Gunbuster 2]. For his future he sees himself more as a mangaka, which is why in the Evangelion manga he worked with great care on the details of the individual images, necessarily simplified in the anime to make the animators' work easier. "If I had wanted to make my own anime, I would have done it," he declared, adding, "the end I imagined for the Evangelion manga is actually very personal, also because I had no indications and no limits from the staff working on the anime." At the end of the conference, when asked about the use of digital in animation, Yoshiyuki Sadamoto stated that only the colorists' task is becoming easier, while the animators' task is becoming more complex, because it involves further intense manual work before moving on to the actual digital work.

To conclude the report of this long and passionate meeting with fans, our note - a bit otaku, we admit - is that we are sorry we could not take a picture of the author's new platinum blonde hair. For one simple reason: Sadamoto continues to be very strict about his own image, and has imposed a "No Video/No Photo" policy on everyone present, as is his custom in almost all public appearances.

Interview with Hideaki Anno (Tracks ARTE, 2016)

- Source: https://www.reddit.com/r/NeonGenesisEvangelion/comments/e3g37b/newly_translated_interview_with_hideaki_anno_2016/

This is a rough translation of Anno's 2016 interview with Tracks ARTE. The original video can be viewed here.

Narrator: The recurring disasters endured by the floating world of Japan have always fed the imagination of their filmmakers. Since the '80s, it is especially animation that has seized this apocalyptic theme. After Akira in '88 and Ghost in the Shell in '95, came the series Neon Genesis Evangelion in '96, created by Hideaki Anno, which would shine in the eyes of millions of fans across the world.

Anno: There is a link, an energy, which connects each individual to the outside world. And I, as a director, have an interest in that link, by showing how a person's inner world is connected physically and spiritually to the world surrounding him. And animation is an ideal medium for making this link apparent. Animation allows me to put in parallel the idea of disaster that occurs in the outside world with the inner traumas experienced by every human being.

Narrator: Born in 1960, he would enroll at the Cinema Department of the University of Osaka and create a parody of Ultraman in which he himself plays the television series's cult character. His skill in animation attracted the eye of Master Miyazaki, who hired the young animator for his film Nausicaa. Besides his own productions, Anno would continue to regularly collaborate with Ghibli, including lending his voice to the main character of the film The Wind Rises in 2013. The animation studio has just declared him one of the greatest directors of the next ten years.

Anno: For me, creativity is an act that consists of filling the hole that we have inside ourselves. If we leave this gaping hole, our anxieties seize our body and it is no longer possible for us to continue living. But these fears of catastrophes, these end-of-the-world visions that I have in me, I also have to get them out of me at times. And animation is what helps me to do that.

Anno: Real-life films never frightened me. When I was a child, it was the monster films that made me tremble in fear. I specifically remember The War of the Gargantuas. This film terrified me. Yes, watching these monster films has had an impact on me.

Narrator: Godzilla has always been the most popular monster in Japan, and it has also continued to cause chaos, especially in Hollywood, where it was featured in a film created in 2014 by Gareth Edwards. Vexed, the Japanese have just called their creatures back to order.

Recently, the historical production studio of Godzilla entrusted the continuation of his adventures to Hideaki Anno, and [his colleague] Shinji Higuchi. The International Festival of Tokyo last year paid homage [to Anno] by presenting his works through real-life photography, from the unabashed adaptation of the manga Cutie Honey to the disillusioned romance of Ryu Murakami, Love and Pop.

Narrator: At point-blank, the director prefers animation, especially when it comes to evoking sexual emotions. He also stated a few years ago that the animation industry and the porn industry have a lot of things in common.

Anno: Animation is the ideal medium to put in scene all that one has in the head. And what does one usually keep in one's head? A heap of frustrations and desires impossible to express in a standard medium connected to reality. Whereas with animation, we can represent everything, since it's already imaginary. And that is what explains the success of animated films. Because for the audience, watching these films, it's also a way to satisfy their most secret desires.

Toshio Okada (OTAKING) seminairs

- Toshio Okada Seminar #224 (2018.04), OTAKING explains "Neon Genesis EVANGELION" OP Animation:
- Translation: Riki
- Source: https://ch.nicovideo.jp/ex/blomaga/ar1467572 ; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qiXPhia1k5k&list=WL&index=7

This is the translation of the beginning part of the Okada Toshio's Seminar on April 1st [2018](#224).

I'd like to talk about Evangelion, but I'd like to read Evangelion from the perspective of "visual expression" rather than the theme.

The reason is that I don't really have anything to say about the theme of Evangelion now either, and to be honest, I'm not really interested in it.

It's more like, "Why do Hayao Miyazaki's food scenes look so good? As well as, "Why are Hideaki Anno's destruction scenes so cool? I want to focus on the fact that.

The Ghibli anime, especially Hayao Miyazaki's food scene, sounds really good, doesn't it?

The reason is that Hayao Miyazaki himself believes that animation is a device for conveying "reality".

In other words, he defines animation as something that accurately conveys the sensations you experience when you eat something and it tastes good, or when you climb a mountain and it's tired, or whatever.

In the same way, the destruction scenes that Hideaki Anno creates are also cool because he believes that "the moment of destruction is the most beautiful".

He believes, "Its essence is revealed by showing how it breaks," or "A person's existence can be felt only at the moment he disappears," so the expression goes in that direction. For example, when it comes to depicting romance, Miyazaki Hayao is an artist who wants to portray "what it feels like to be in love with someone else."

On the other hand, Anno Hideaki wants to portray, "how it is hard when you're betrayed by someone else and you realize how much you loved that person for the first time," and he tries to convey "the actual sensation that comes from being broken".

That's the difference in direction between the two artists, and that's why Hideaki Anno's destruction scenes are always so beautiful, and we want to see them, even if someone's bleeding in them.

- Toshio Okada Seminar #225 (2018.04): OTAKING explains "Hideaki Anno Style"
- Translation: Riki
- Source: https://ch.nicovideo.jp/ex/blomaga/ar1476954 ; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dNSa7iMYU2o&list=WL&index=10

This is the translation of the beginning part of the Okada Toshio's Seminar on April 8th (#225).

One of the characteristics of the visual style of "Evangelion" is the unique cutting style.

This is the second scene in the second episode of Eva, "The Beast," the title opening.

People are having a meeting.

We find out later that this is a meeting of the Instrumentality of Mankind, but we don't know at this point.

It's a conversation between Commander Ikari and guys there.

First of all, the cut showed them all from an overhead view.

They say "The Angel revisited? That's too sudden." "It's the same as 15 years ago." "Misfortune comes without warning."

Every time one person speaks a line, the cut switches from here.

Then the screen changed to a close-up view and he says, "It's a good thing we didn't waste our investment. The U.S. representative in front says, "We're fortunate that our prior investment was not in vain."

Then the Russian national team next starts talking, "We don't know that yet."

The compositions of these two shots are interesting.

There are only two people placed side by side, but there's a diagonal perspective from the back to the front.

'I don't know about that one yet. If it doesn't work, it's useless.' the Russian representative in front says hatefully.

It's the Chinese national team, pictured next to the Russian national team in this cut, that says the next line.

So, normally, he doesn't need to switch the cut but the cut changes again.

He says, "Correct. You have to make it sure that all of the angel handling, information manipulation, and Nerv operations, which are now well known facts, are handled properly and quickly," from under Ikari Gendo's armpit.

Then Gendo Ikari replies.

Again, the composition, with Gendo, the talker, placed as far as he can in the corner.

He says, "Don't worry. I've already dealt with that matter."

・・・

The structure is designed to cut the scene every time one person says one line.

Normally, we don't do this wasteful work.

Especially with the scenes where the Chinese representative speaking, it's really a waste of time.

The Russians next to China speak, and then the Chinese speak. It would have been easier to make them speak with the same cut and less layout. But for some reason, they cut a section and made the Chinese representative speak from a very unnatural angle.

Of course, this kind of "cutting for each line" was done before Eva but this was used a lot in Evangelion.

Especially the cuts that aren't even meant to be separated that I just showed you, it looks like he's just trying to create a unique style.

・・・

So why does he cut the scenes for each line like this?

Coming think about whether he always does it in Eva, that's not true.

This is a scene right in the middle of the first episode.

Shinji Ikari, the main character, is being led through Nerv headquarters and is on an escalator running diagonally.

You can see a giant hand behind him. This is the "Eva-0" that is now frozen.

This is the scene where Shinji is listening to the conversation between Ritsuko and Misato while passing in front of it.

"What about the Eva-01?" "It's still in B mode and cooling."

"It's never been moved before, has it?" "Launch rate is 0.000000001%. The O-9 SYSTEM is the perfect name for it."

"Does that mean it's not working?" "Well, excuse me, but there are no zeroes."

-- Two of them have been talking like this.

It's a long take in the whole time of this conversation.

As you can see from these scenes, in Evangelion he uses more scenes where the dialogue goes in one fixed cut, rather than the other.

And yet, sometimes, the cut switches from one line of dialogue to the next.

・・・

You'd know this if you watched through the Evangelion TV series, but in fact, in Evangelion the cuts tend to be changed frequently in scenes where a dialogue is pointless or empty.

The guys say various things in the meeting scene earlier, but actually, the dialogue itself is empty.

"It's a blessing. We're lucky in that our earlier investment was not wasted."

"I don't know about that one yet. If it doesn't work, it's useless."

"Well, you have to make it sure that all of the angel handling, information manipulation, and Nerf operations, which are now well known facts, are handled properly and quickly."

--So far, there's nothing in there other than "Ikari Gendo is being accused".

They don't specifically tell him to do this or that, they just use words that sound a bit difficult to understand and then accuse him up in a sarcastic manner.

Moreover, Gendo says one word of excuse without specifics, "I've already dealt with that matter". Just like that, they all stopped hurling it right there (lol).

・・・

Apparently, this scene looks like a high intelligence, but it's not. In a harsh way, the less intelligent people want to use difficult words. To be clear, it's not that high of a level scene.

And I think this kind of "covering up for the weaknesses in the scenario and the content of the dialogue with the strength of the screen" is what I call the "Eva style".

If there's something in the dialogue, if the drama is moving, if the characters' minds are properly engaged, or if it's related to the story, he shoots a long take with a fixed camera.

For example, the scene of the conversation between Ritsuko and Misato is just a simple cut of Shinji's black silhouette in a dark place. But the dialogue is interesting there, so it's enough to make you watch it.

However, if the dialogue is pointless or empty, he cuts the scene into smaller pieces to make it look interesting.

This was Evangelion style.

I just said in the past tense that "this was Evangelion style" because that's what Hideaki Anno's latest film, Shin Godzilla, evolving even further.

Megumi Ogata x Keiji Tanaka: Evangelion Special Talk (2020)

- Date:September 12, 2020
- Translation: unknown/anonymous
- Source: [12]

Partly translated excerpts

Shinji and Kaworu, two boys snuggled up together.

Interviewer: Speaking of Shinji-kun, he never really gets close to any girls. But once Kaworu-kun shows up, he immediately goes to him.

Ogata: I don't think "goes to" is the right word for it. I always have people asking me, even at conventions overseas, "Kaworu-kun and Shinji-kun are lovers, right?" and when I say no they're always like, "What!?" and totally disappointed. (laughs)

He's been abandoned by everyone, he has no friends or parents to trust in, and no longer has a place where he belongs. And at this point, a single person comes to him and tells him he understands him. Wouldn't anyone act the same way if they were in Shinji's position? He has no one but Kaworu-kun at that point. In that way, he's still just a child.

Tanaka Keiji: It was the same in Q too, he had no one but Kaworu-kun.

Ogata: The new movies are similar to the TV series, but the world is still different, so Shinji's relationship with Kaworu-kun is also slightly different from how it was back then too.

Interviewer: How is it different?

Ogata: 1.0 doesn't simply follow episodes 1-6, a big change between the new movies and the TV series is that the adults firmly act like adults. Even if the situation is the same up to the end of episode 6, Shinji's feelings are different this time. For instance, Misato encourages him to pilot by explaining to him he's not the only one fighting, as soon as he dies her and everyone else dies too. So, he's not alone. And she reaches her hand out to him. So when Shinji grips her hand back, it means he's decided to pilot for that reason. And he clings to that. It's completely different from the Yamato strategy in the TV series. Then in 2.0 we have a direct continuation that ends with Shinji feeling like he accomplished something. But then in 3.0 he's in complete confusion, "Why is everyone so angry at me?"

[...]

Ogata: He comes to meet Kaworu not as someone he can depend on, but as a friend that's his equal. This Shinji feels a sense of accomplishment and is mentally stronger. So that's why even if the setting is the same, the story ends up differing from the TV series.

Q: Looking from an outsider's perspective, I feel so bad for him. Just how is he going to become happy?

Ogata: Perhaps he's not in high spirits, but I think Shinji has plenty of happiness. He has a place that he belongs, isn't that in itself an amazing thing? I've never once thought of Shinji as being unhappy. Perhaps there are times where Shinji himself thinks so though, especially in the TV Series.

Tanaka: I felt Shinji's situation was so brutal when I watched it. And he's never rewarded in the end. He's tried so hard, yet he's never rewarded for his efforts... It's not as if he isn't loved, it's just that he's forgotten his memories of when his mom loved him when he was little. He grew up without knowing the love of a parent, and so he hungered for love so much he would have been satisfied with the tiniest bit of love from another. And I think Shinji wanted someone to talk about his feelings to. He has the type of personality where it's hard to talk to others. He wants someone to talk to, and even though there are people who care about him, none of them really can listen/be there for him to the extent he wants.

Interviewer: Except for Kaworu-kun.

Tanaka: But I wonder if just having a place to belong to is enough to make someone happy. Though it's true the adults were portrayed quite differently in the TV Series. I thought the ending of Q was so heartbreaking, especially the part about Kaworu-kun. Even though Kaworu-kun was the only one who could help him at that point.

[...]

Ogata: Shinji crumbled to the point of being unable to even talk. His friend's neck exploded right before his eyes, who can blame him. And what caused the explosion was a device that was originally on his own neck.

Ogata: But in the end he's pulled back on his feet and dragged along, and that's something in itself. At least that's far better than being alone. Anno-san made the TV Series as a live performance, and all his feelings at the time are packed in the work. The new movies are different from the series, because Anno has gone through events in his life where he's also different from back then. He started working on the new movies because he decided he wanted to make them purely as entertainment, so of course they'd be different. Well, I'm not Anno-san, so I don't know what his specific thoughts/intentions are.

Toshio Okada: A shocking encounter between Toshio Okada and Hideaki Anno.

- From "Well, I've Got Money" by Toshio Okada, Vol. 3
- Translation: Riki
- Source: http://blog.freeex.jp/archives/51404784.html

The DAICON III opening animation is now the focus of attention in Kazuhiko Shimamoto's serialized manga, "Aoi Honoo".

In Toshio Okada's book "Well, I've got the money", the following process is described as a coming-of-age story of talented young people, along with the movement of huge amounts of money for them, college students, at that time.

1. The launch of the event

2. Meeting with Hideaki Anno, Takami Akai, and Hiroyuki Yamaga

3. DAICON IV

4. Launch of Gainax

This time, we will highlight the shocking encounter between Okada and Director Anno.

[...]

The budget for the science fiction convention was a total of 720,000 yen (approximately US$7K)!

"Yes!"

"With this much money, we can do anything!"

"We can say goodbye to deficits!"

"I mean, it's rather impossible to spend it all, isn't it? Ha-ha-ha-ha! Ha-ha-ha-ha!"

Our eyes were dazzled by the abundance of funds, and our previously student-like sense of money changed drastically.

"Seven hundred thousand yen (approximately US$6,500) for the venue?"

"That's cheap!"

"I'll hold it for three days!"

Still, it was only two hundred thousand yen (approximately US$1,900). The four- or eight-page program book we had been using was not cool.

Let's try forty pages. No matter how much we spent, we couldn't run out of money, so we produced a variety of original goods.

Still, we didn't waste a single penny. For the mascot made from felt fabric, I stole the fabric from my parents' embroidery factory in the middle of the night, printed it out using the print gokko (*1), and had the female staff sew it.

For the boys, I had them make a garage kit by hand.

- 1) A self-contained compact color printing system invented in 1977, by Noboru Hayama.

One day, while we were running an event with no money to lose, one of the staff members mentioned that there was an interesting student at Osaka University of Arts.

"A guy named Akai will draw as many cute girls as you want if you buy him a cup of coffee." *"Anno draws as many tanks and robots as he can with a piece of toast."* That sounds good. Let them draw something, and the program book will be gorgeous.

"I'll make Akai drink ten or twenty cups of coffee every day. I'll make Anno eat a belly full of toast. Let's get them on board, no matter what."

With a light heart, I sent my staff to scout for them.

Soon after, I got a call from an excited staff member.

"This Anno guy is amazing! While eating a piece of toast, he draws a very complicated robot on a Daiei calculation sheet(*2) at a very high speed. When you flip through it, it's working!"

- 2) Notepads sold in supermarkets that are inexpensive and have thin paper that makes it easy to see the picture underneath.

It was our first encounter with Anno Hideaki, the genius who would later create Evangelion.

He, Takami Akai, and Hiroyuki Yamaga, who came along as a bonus, and we decided to make a five-minute 8mm animation as the opening film for the SF convention.

It's hard to make an animation, even if it's only five minutes long.

I can call as many staff as I want from my university's science fiction club, but first I need a big place for them to work.

I had no choice but to use my house. I occupied my sister's room, who left home after marriage, as a permanent studio for more than half a year.

My room next door became a sleeping room for the staff.

Stationery such as paper and pencils can hardly be expensive.

But that's not all that is needed to make an animation.

You have to use special paints to paint on transparent plastic sheets called cels.

There are special cels available, but they are very expensive. We went to an industrial park in Minami-Osaka, bought a huge transparent PVC board, cut it to the required size, and punched holes in it with an office two-hole punch.

It's not as good as a real three-hole punch, but it completes the handmade cell.

I also ordered special paints from Tokyo.

I also bought some steel materials at Daiei (supermarket) and made a handmade shooting stand.

The large amount of film, the development costs, the test shooting, and the failed cell painting for staff training were all costly.

It was common to have to redo the entire film due to uneven painting and color mistakes.

My sister's room became too small for us, so I asked my parents to rent one floor of a small embroidery factory.

The whole floor was lined with drawing desks, painting desks, and art materials, and it was spectacular.

The rent was free, but I found we were running out of money.

AnnoCinema video interviews

AnnoCinema has several subtitled Anno interviews:

- **Hideaki Anno interviewed by Noriko Hidaka**: *Hot off the success of NGE, Hideaki Anno is interviewed by Noriko Hidaka, whom he worked with during "Nadia: The Secret of Blue Water".* This is the same as The World of Hideaki Anno (11/1996).
- **Hideaki Anno on Ultraman**: *Hideaki Anno, Shinji Higuchi, among others, are interviewed by Ultraman's Akiko Fuji (Hiroko Sakurai).*
- **Hayao Miyazaki chats with Hideaki Anno**: *Hideaki Anno surprises Hayao Miyazaki in the Sahara desert, and the two directors sit down for a chat about each other's work.*
- **Hideaki Anno interview on Khara's 10th Anniversary**: *Hideaki Anno talks about Khara as a company, what he would like people to pay attention in his works, development of Shin Godzilla, and more, in this interview during the exhibition to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Studio khara!*
- **Hideaki Anno Interview from MPEG Special (1996)**: *An interview with the master from a magazine called "MPEG Special." Anno talks about his method of crafting a story (one less used in the west), reveals the true target demographic of Neon Genesis Evangelion, and why Rei and Asuka were created.*
- **Hideaki Anno's Early Days**
- **Hideaki Anno on Animation**
- **Making of End of Evangelion**
- **Kihachi Okamoto x Hideaki Anno**: *Hideaki Anno talks to his favorite director, Kihachi Okamoto. 1996, for the Animage magazine.* Same as Hideaki Anno: Valuable conversation between director Hideaki Anno and Kihachi Okamoto (Animage 01/1997)

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